

# A History of Lutheranism in Korea

—A Personal Account—

Won Yong Ji



Concordia Seminary Monograph Series

Number 1



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**Dr. Won Yong Ji** received his Th. D. from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1957. The following year he returned to his homeland to serve as a Korean national co-worker in the mission outreach initiated in Korea by the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod in 1958. Presently he serves as a professor on the faculties of both Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and Luther Seminary in Shingal, Korea.

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—"... the kind of monograph historians and missiologists will find invaluable... a knowledgeable story of beginnings, with appending of documents as corroborative resources."

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OF  
LUTHERANISM IN KOREA

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## Foreword

**I**t is appropriate that Dr. Won Yong Ji writes the first history of Lutheranism in Korea. Though others of us were also on the scene as members of the team which pioneered the Lutheran presence in Korea, Dr. Ji is best equipped to "tell the story as it really happened." Perhaps nowhere on the contemporary Lutheran world mission scene has leadership by a national been exerted so effectively, from the very outset, in shaping and guiding the destiny of a young church than in Korea. This multi-talented churchman had a direct hand in almost every phase of the missionary enterprise. He shared his unique gifts in undergirding and supporting other Korean Christians in the one mission of Christ, while at the same time working actively and creatively to establish a Lutheran fellowship in Korea.

Dr. Ji's direct participation in the life of both Oriental and Western cultures brought to us in those fledgling years an uncommon understanding of the essential roles of both the sending and the receiving churches. Though he served as an effective cross-cultural communicator and liaison between Korean national, expatriate missionary and mission agency, he was never ambivalent as to his primary role. First and foremost, he was a caring advocate and vigorous champion of Christ's mission in Korea in the "Korean way." Time and again, he challenged our "Western suitcase logic," as he termed it, and insisted on integrity in mission principles and strategies. Korea's church today is richer for the creative struggle of those formative early years.

I am grateful to Dr. Ji for presenting his study as an autobiographical memoir. What better way to be introduced to the Korea which some of us have come to know and love! Though

presented in an easy-to-read style his book is serious history with no ill-founded generalizations or romanticizing of the past. Dr. Ji, always the academician and scholar, writes an authentic and meticulously documented narrative; his treatment is both comprehensive and penetrating, at times disarmingly candid, revealing, and always honest.

A personal note: As I read each page, I found myself remembering the people and events, often moist-eyed. What a rare privilege to have known Dr. Ji as colleague and brother and to have been associated with the Lutheran Christians of Korea ! In truth, the history of Lutheranism in Korea has been written on the fleshly tablets of brothers and sisters who have learned first-hand that the key to the vitality and strength of a young church is the fostering of genuine inter-personal relationships.

We gratefully salute Dr. Ji for writing the opening chapter of the history of the Lutheran Church in Korea. It is a notable contribution to mission history. We invoke God's blessings as He continues to call and challenge His people to receive the legacy of the past and share the Gospel in our time with its new opportunities and exciting possibilities.

L. Paul Bartling

## Introduction

Korea was hardly known to the American public prior to the Korean war of 1950-1953. But hundreds of thousands of U.S. military personnel served in that "tough little war," and since then more than a million have spent a tour of duty with the U.S. forces stationed in Korea to help ensure stability on the Korean peninsula.

Today, however, Korea is known to Americans, and to the world, less in military terms and more in economic terms. Korea has joined the ranks of the industrial nations, its consumer goods and high-tech products becoming commonplace and its competitiveness making a strong impact on the international market. The most dramatic signal of Korea's emergence into "world class" is the holding of the 1988 summer Olympic games in Seoul, the motto being "Seoul to the world — the world to Seoul."

The image of Korea as an economic success story makes it difficult to remember that the motive for beginning Lutheran mission work in Korea was colored by the poverty and suffering of the Korean people. Lutheran chaplains and other military personnel returned from service in Korea with heart-rending stories of a people hard pressed by a war that had swept up and down their land, and they urged their church leaders to consider mission work among these hardy people who had already demonstrated a lively response to the preaching of the gospel. The decision of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to take up this call to mission in Korea is told in a unique way in this volume.

If the Korean economic miracle has made a forceful impression on the American consciousness in general, the corresponding

success story of the Korean church has likewise caught the attention of the Christian world. At the time of the Korean war the Christians of Korea constituted a mere four percent or so of the South Korean population of some twenty-two million people; the statistics are inexact because of the wartime conditions and the fleeing of several million people from the north to the south. Now in 1988 the South Korean population numbers over 41 million of whom nearly twenty-five percent are counted as Christians, and their church buildings and vital worship programs impress themselves upon every community in the land. Visitors to Korea come primed to visit the largest church in the world—the Full Gospel Central Church (Assemblies of God) in Seoul which claims more than half a million members, or the largest Presbyterian church in the world, the largest Methodist church, and so on. Christian leaders from around the world flock to Korea for church growth seminars, seeking to probe the secret of the phenomenal growth of the Korean church.

The Christian churches were already well established in Korea in the 1950s and the question as to why the Lutheran Church should begin another denominational effort among this homogeneous people surfaced from the start. The question was addressed in some measure by the Board for Foreign Missions in its "Brief" presented to The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod asking permission to begin work in Korea. The question also lay on the hearts of the missionary team which formed the vanguard of the Lutheran mission in 1958, and it came sharply to the fore already in the first weeks on the scene in Korea as the Lutheran mission endeavor came to the attention of Korean church leaders, the missionary establishment, and even dissident Christian groups which sought to align themselves with the Lutheran newcomers.

Indeed, the question of "why the Lutherans in Korea" lingers still today. For some, the question takes on added weight in the face of the impressive growth of the older Korean churches over

the past thirty years, a pattern which the Lutheran Church in Korea has not been able to match. Whatever approach one may take to the question of "Ought the Lutherans commit their energies to mission in Korea?" it was a moot question once the decision was made and the missionary team dispatched. From then on the question of "why" became rather a matter of "how" the Lutheran mission understood itself and of "what" shape its endeavor should take among the thriving Protestant and Roman Catholic churches of Korea.

That self-understanding of the Lutheran presence in Korea was forged in the early years through intense discussions by the Lutheran expatriate missionaries and their national colleague, Dr. Won Yong Ji. In simplest terms, the stance was then and still is that the Lutheran Church in Korea aims not to compete with other Christian bodies but rather to contribute to the upbuilding of the entire church of Christ in this land. The Lutheran effort should not further divide an already splintered church but should contribute to its unity. By this approach the Lutherans felt that they were and are being true both to a Biblical understanding of the church and to the best Lutheran tradition.

In practical terms, the stance led to an early emphasis on the production of radio and literature "media" programs which were seen not primarily as means for producing Lutheran believers but foremost as means for building up the churches already reaching out into every Korean city and farm village. The Lutheran church is a "confessional" church and every dimension of its confession should serve above all the Spirit's upbuilding of the entire church in Korea. This priority of the Lutheran mission in Korea is given sharp focus by the author of this volume as he describes and interprets the events.

The question of "why the Lutherans in Korea" may find one set of answers in the interest regarding Korea generated by the Korean war, and another set of answers in the way that the



Lutheran mission and church took shape in Korea. Each dimension of the question recognizes that it is always the Spirit which leads and directs the church in mission. Thus the question finds yet another answer in the appearance on the Lutheran scene of a gift of the Spirit in the person of Won Yong Ji. The availability of a Korean fully trained as a Lutheran theologian was a contributing motive for undertaking the Lutheran mission in Korea, as well as for its timing.

Dr. Ji's autobiographical sketches in his book provide the reader with some engaging scenes along the road that led from his village home in the north of Korea to his role with the pioneer Lutheran missionary team to South Korea. However, a further overview of his career including the later years will help the reader grasp the range of his lifelong contributions to Lutheranism.

Won Yong Ji was a young man of 23 years when he sailed from the harbor of Inchon, west of Seoul, on March 27, 1948, with a student visa in hand for study in the United States. A "displaced person" from the communist-controlled North Korea, he had been studying in Seoul and now had received a study scholarship from the airmen of the U.S. 5th Air Force stationed at Kimpo Air Base near Seoul.

It was ten years and six months later, on September 26, 1958, that he returned to Korea, now Dr. Won Yong Ji with his wife and infant daughter. He had been commissioned by the Board for Foreign Missions of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as part of a missionary team to begin Lutheran work in Korea. The other members of the team, three American clergy and their families, had arrived in Korea earlier the same year and were now learning the Korean language. This ten-year period marks the first phase of Ji's involvement with the Lutheran church.

For the next decade Ji worked with the Korea Lutheran Mission, spearheading its work in literature and radio ministries and pastoring the first Lutheran congregation in Korea. However,

this work was interrupted by a call from the larger church, leading to ten years of service in Europe, first for seven years as Secretary for Asia of the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland, and then for three years as theological consultant and study secretary with the Missionswerk of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany.

Since 1978, marking off another decade, Ji has been an associate professor of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Concurrently since 1984 he has also served as professor of Luther Seminary near Seoul, spending the spring semester each year in Korea.

Now nearing retirement, Dr. Ji has put into writing this account of Lutheranism in Korea from the viewpoint of his own involvement. He writes at times in an autobiographical way, yet he consistently provides full documentation and reference notes. This book is at once a history and a primary source for future histories.

In heart and in mind Dr. Ji is a man of his roots. He remains more closely attached to his native culture than one might expect of a person who has lived outside his homeland for so many years. His love for Korea is clearly reflected in this book about the beginnings of the Lutheran Church in Korea.

Dr. Ji's "personal account" has a personal dimension also for this writer. It was my privilege to work with him on the same "team" during the early years of the Lutheran mission in Korea. I have looked to him as colleague and friend for thirty years, drawing on his wisdom, borrowing his courage, finding strength in his zest for life. I am sure that the readers will glean some measure of these same gifts, and rewarding insights into the beginnings of a young church as well, as they read his account of Lutheranism in Korea.

January 13, 1988  
Maynard W. Dorow



## List of Abbreviations

AAL	=	Aid Association for Lutherans
AELC	=	Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches
ALC	=	American Lutheran Church
BFM	=	Board of Foreign Missions of LCMS
BMS	=	Board for Mission Services of LCMS (or BMS/LCMS)
BWM	=	Board for World Missions of LCMS (or BWM/LCMS)
CBS	=	Christian Broadcasting System in Korea
CCC	=	Correspondence Courses in Christianity (correspondence courses operated by KLM/LCK)
CCC/LWF	=	Commission on Church Cooperation of the Lutheran World Federation
CLS-K	=	Christian Literature Society of Korea
CTCR	=	Commission on Theology and Church Relations of LCMS
CWS	=	Church World Service
DCC	=	Department of Church Cooperation of LWF
EACC	=	East Asia Christian Conference (now, Christian Conference of Asia)
ILC	=	The International Lutheran Church and Servicemen's Center, Seoul
KCWS	=	Church World Service in Korea
KLH	=	Korea Lutheran Hour
KLM	=	Korea Lutheran Mission
KLM/LCK	=	Korea Lutheran Mission and the Lutheran Church in Korea

#### 14 *List of Abbreviations*

LCA	=	Lutheran Church in America
LCK	=	Lutheran Church in Korea
LCMS	=	The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
LLL	=	Lutheran Laymen's League
LSML	=	Lutheran Servicemen's Memorial Library
LWF	=	Lutheran World Federation
LWML	=	Lutheran Women's Missionary League
NCCK	=	National Council of Churches in Korea
ROK	=	The Republic of Korea
WCC	=	World Council of Churches

## Author's Preface

The conception of this book took place in 1981 when contemplating the 25th anniversary of the Korea Lutheran Mission in 1983. However, other duties prevented me from taking up this worthy project immediately. In addition, the amount of work required for such a venture was much greater than originally anticipated. From that time, however, I reflected much on the important subject of preparing a history of Lutheranism in Korea.

I frequently dreamt about this subject. For a long time I felt a sense of responsibility to formulate the story of Lutheranism in Korea; and I felt the need to do this before "night cometh," while there is still time and while many valuable "primary" sources are still within reach. Witnesses are by and by being buried in the pile of time.

This book is a story of many people who have been involved in the common task of God's mission in and for the world. I have been extremely fortunate to have many distinguished, sensitive colleagues who knew me well, including my weaknesses and shortcomings, and encouraged me. Among them are Germans (like Horst Becker), Norwegians (like Sigurd Aske), Swedes (like Carl Johann Hellberg), Americans (like my expatriate co-workers in the KLM and LCK over the years), as well as many dedicated Korean colleagues. They are too numerous to mention them all. Indeed, I am surrounded by a great "cloud of witnesses."

At first I thought that my lifetime colleagues Maynard Dorow, Hilbert "George" Riemer and I might write this as joint authors, making use of materials from our colleagues in Korea and in America. We realized that there are both advantages and disadvantages in such a joint venture. After much serious

reflection and discussion these two colleagues persuaded me to write the book alone. They would assist me with comments and criticisms. This method would, they felt, give a more definite 'point of view' rather than many points of view which might cloud the issues. With their encouragement and with the 1985 AAL Behnken Post-Doctoral Fellowship which was awarded to me, I decided to undertake this challenging task.

In part, this book is autobiographical (though not a memoir nor an autobiography in the ordinary sense), and in some ways it is a narrative description which also includes personal comments and assessments. Naturally, there is a considerable amount of subjectivity because of my intimate involvement with Korea Lutheran Mission then and considerable participation in the Lutheran Church in Korea now. In order to preserve as much objectivity and factuality as possible, the book is documented with reference notes and other pertinent materials, such as appendices, documentation and photographs. The dates and facts have been carefully checked and confirmed.

I am fully aware of certain difficulties, especially the risk of presenting stories and episodes of an historical nature while most of the people involved are still living. Once I read a noteworthy statement in the "Service Bulletin" of Concordia Historical Institute in St. Louis as part of the policies relating to researchers: "Generally, no researcher shall be granted access to any archives, manuscripts or private papers until 25 years have elapsed when issued by a Board, Commission or agency, or 25 years after the death of the collector or depositor" (#29A, rev. 9/25). My own personal close connection with the subjects in this monograph made the writing very hard at times and left me feeling awkward. How can one tell his own story without leaving some impression of self-exaltation? In light of all these factors, it may be more correct to say that this volume is a story rather than a history, or at the most a history "within," — a kind of "unofficial" narrative

memoir on the Lutheran venture in Korea.

When the next book on this subject appears at the LCK's **hwan-kap** (60th birthday in traditional custom) in 2018 or at its centennial in 2058, it may be, under God's blessing, a more objective and further edifying volume. By that time the first generations of witnesses will be in their heavenly abode.

With grateful appreciation I acknowledge the help of my esteemed colleagues in Korea, especially Missionary Maynard Dorow and his wife Shirley and Missionary Hilbert "George" Riemer, who read the manuscript and made many valuable comments and suggestions. I also want to thank Dr. William J. Danker who provided a number of valuable materials and furthermore read the entire manuscript and made helpful comments.

Sincere gratitude is extended to the Aid Association for Lutherans at Appleton, Wisconsin, whose John W. Behnken Presidential Post-Doctoral Fellowship (1985) was instrumental in facilitating this project.

Special thanks are due to Ms. Debbie Roediger for her patience and hard work in typing and putting the text into the computer. Last, I thank our daughter Hyun Mee who read the typescript and offered helpful suggestions, and my wife Aei Kyong who has been a great encouragement to me throughout this undertaking.

Also my appreciation goes to the Concordia Seminary Monograph Series Committee which has published this modest work, and to Concordia Sa in Seoul, Korea, which has printed and produced it.

March 27, 1988

Won Yong Ji

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## **Part One**

# **KOREA AND CHRISTIANITY**

## Chapter I

# KOREA: My Homeland

### 1. Our Kumsoo-Kangsan

Almost every day during 1968-75, as I looked from my office window at the Lutheran World Federation headquarters in Geneva and saw Mont Blanc in France to the east, the beautiful city of Geneva and the peaceful Lake Lemman and the Jura mountains to the west, I thought nostalgically of the "Switzerland of Asia," the HAN Peninsula in the Far East, the land of Korea. This land gave me birth, nurtured me in my childhood and youth, and later provided me with an exciting area for my work. Three decades of my life's pilgrimage in foreign lands in the West have caused me to assess this Korean Peninsula, our **kumsoo-kangsan**,<sup>[1]</sup> from a distance, but always with a close feeling and an

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[1] "Kumsoo Kangsan" literally means "beautiful rivers and mountains"; it is commonly used in reference to the Korean peninsula by the Koreans. One of the popular songs, included in the Korean Protestant Hymnal, written by a Korean NAMKUNG Euk (1863-1939) reads:

3000 Ri Peninsula, *kum-soo-kang-san*;

God-given beautiful Land.

Many tasks are in this Land.

From all corners, calling workers.

Who would say gladly, 'I will go' ?

Go to work, and for work;

For this blessed land.

With us His order to work,

For this our *kum-soo-kang-san*.

"3000 Ri" = about 750 miles, from the farthest south to the farthest north of the Korean peninsula.

ever-longing sentiment. Switzerland, where I worked for more than seven years, fascinated me and left me with many unforgettable memories; Germany, where I studied and worked for four years, earned my deep admiration; and the United States of America, which has provided me with many wonderful opportunities, causes me to marvel at its vastness and openness of space and mind. I have profound respect for these lands and their peoples. I appreciate immensely their aspirations and ways of life. However, my love is for Korea, my homeland, where the Creator granted me space to begin life, to receive my first impressions about life, and to live through much hardship in the early years of my life. Those years of my youth taught me to better appreciate the many marvelous things that have since then happened to me.

I was born and raised in a small mountain village called Ga-Rae-Gol which had four humble farming families. The village was located in Pak-Chun County in far Northern Pyung-buk Province, only 35 miles from the Yalu River, by the Korean-Manchurian border. There my "small bones became big"; I began to discern the meaning of life, and acquired many of the habits, disciplines and attitudes which have remained with me all my life. I still vividly remember the beautiful azaleas in the mountains, the forsythia in the village and the pumpkin flowers next to our house fence and yard. The setting was beautiful, but our life was tough. Disciplined family life and hard work in bare feet from early childhood made me strong physically and mentally. Like the average Korean family, my ancestors were influenced by Confucianism. It was a general rule in my family, as among all families of good reputation, to keep the "Five Principles of Life" which stemmed from the teachings of Confucius some 2,500 years ago.<sup>[2]</sup> These principles are still a strong moral force among the

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[2] In Confucian thought (ca. 551 — ca. 479 B. C.) society was believed to

people of Korea. Respect and obedience were at the core of these principles. Although my father was a tenant farmer who had inherited no land or money, his ambition was to keep up the good reputation of his family. He was determined to educate his children to be morally sound, and he held to the motto, "spare the rod and spoil the child." He demanded that his children be obedient to their parents. He himself was absolutely obedient to his widowed mother—our grandmother—who lived with us in the same house.

Among other things, I still have vivid memories of the clean cold water from the well in our village, the fresh air and the clear, icy spring water in the streams and brooks, the delightful sound of the cuckoo's singing, and the somewhat melancholy tune of the wild doves cooing in the mountains. I remember children playing games: foot races, catching-ball, jumping, playing in the streams, flying kites, or shooting sparrows with a bow or a slingshot.<sup>[3]</sup> Often they would sing songs learned at the small country school a mile away from my village. Between the mountains their echo

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function rightly only according to a hierarchial order and the application of "Li".

(1) *Ruler and Subject*: The subject's role of respect is obvious, but the ruler also had obligation to the subject and whatever powers were above him.

(2) *Father and Son*: The ideal of "filial piety," which also included veneration after the death of the father and mother.

(3) *Husband and Wife*: The wife was always subject to her husband or under the care of her son, the husband to his father or older brother, etc.

(4) *The Elder and the Younger*: No younger brother would ever act disrespectfully to the older.

(5) *Between Friends*: This was applied even outside the immediate family, and thus took care of extra-family relationships. The central idea was that the family is the basic unit, and no one was 'free' as an individual.

- [3] Describing the turning of nature in the spring in Korea, Mrs. Shirley Dorow wrote in April, 1965, a newsletter to friends in America:  
— yellow forsythia and lavender azalea blossoms tingeing the mountain

would give a shrill vibration, and they thought they were singing very well. A song reads:

Now when a gem lies buried  
           'Neath soil and rocky ore:  
 Before it's ground and polished  
           'Tis dust and nothing more!  
 So boys and girls be mindful  
           Your studies to pursue  
 Till mind and body both shall be  
           A jewel rare for you.

Since then, Korea has changed drastically. The land has been divided, since 1945, into South and North with two entirely different ideologies and two incompatible economic and political systems. Minds are divided, families are separated; mutual suspicion between the peoples living under these communist and capitalist systems of life has increased since the beginning of the tragedy on the peninsula at the end of World War II. My family and my life are no exception. Ever since my 21st birthday, I have been longing for the reunification of our beloved country.

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slopes and garlanding the walls around each home.

- swallows, returned from a winter in the south, swooping gracefully from nest to food haunts.
- clouds of dust hanging on the horizons...and kites rising like dragons in the strong winds.
- farmers plowing, bending, straining behind strong oxen, digging, resting...tired of winter and glad for summer's promise of harvest to follow.
- *kimchee* jars unearthed from their winter underground hibernation, glistening in pert rows in each courtyard ready for spring soy-sauce making.
- winter's idle hours, gone.

## **2. The Realities of the HAN Peninsula**

Korea is an old country whose history dates back to the time of Solomon. The land was ruled by kingdoms and dynasties. The last one was King Yi Dynasty (1392-1910) which lasted for more than five hundred years, until 1910 when Korea was annexed by Japan. Japan had finally realized its long-held dream of occupying Korea. Korea had strategic importance for Japan, politically, economically and militarily, and gave them access to the Asian continent. Thus for 36 years Korea was ruled by Japan during which time Japan tried hard to "japanize" Korea and its people by all possible means, namely, changing their mind, language, belief, religion, even their names. The "japanizing" effort greatly affected the Christian mission work in general as well as the Korean churches and Christians who were frequently persecuted, imprisoned and martyred, especially during the war time.

At the end of World War II, when the Japanese troops had surrendered to the Allied Forces, the Korean Peninsula was arbitrarily divided in two by agreement of the Allied Nations (the Koreans had no say in the matter): the northern half occupied by the Russian troops and the south by the US Forces. Since then the land has remained divided in two parts, the communist regime in the North, and the capitalistic democratic regime in the South. This division brought the worst tragedy upon the Korean people in all their history.

(The interested readers may find "A Resume of the History of Korea" in Documentation I.)

There are approximately 60 million people on the Korean peninsula (over 40 million in the South, 20 million in the North), and about two million residing outside of Korea. Koreans are a relatively homogeneous people with one language and culture, and one identity as a race with closely related ethnic backgrounds. The



peninsula is an area of strategic importance in East Asia, being a political, commercial and cultural crossroads of the surrounding nations. Korea's position and history may be compared to that of Palestine in the Middle East or Poland in Europe. The history of the Koreans is an account of a people constantly besieged by larger nations bent on dominating them, like an assaulted pawn on a chessboard. Korea has often been an arena for international power struggles. Yet the people have always managed to retain their own distinctive identity and culture. They are, in general, hard-working, industrious and prudent, though sometimes too independent-minded, too self-interested, and perhaps a bit too quick-tempered. These characteristics may have their origin in the Korean life environment: rugged land, continental climate with distinct changes of four seasons, frequent encounter and challenges from outside forces, and foreign interferences in history. Indeed environment and history molded their character.

For thousands of years the Koreans have spoken a distinctive language, a Ural-Altaic tongue which shares a common origin with Turkic, Finnish and Hungarian. Up to the end of the 15th century they used Chinese characters with Korean pronunciation. However, about 1440 King Sejong the Great (1397-1450), according to generally accepted tradition, appointed a commission of scholars to devise a phonetic alphabet which could be readily learned by the common people. The result was a phonetic alphabet of 24 letters, known as **hangul**, which has been in use since then, although it did not enjoy widespread use for several generations. However, it is now perhaps one of the most scientific alphabets in use in the world. Modern Korean is written frequently in a mixed script in which **hanja** is used for Chinese loan words and **hangul** for purely Korean items and expressions as well as words of Chinese derivation.

Archaeological evidence indicates that paleolithic man first came to the peninsula nearly 30,000 years ago. Thus many Koreans took

their origin with other peoples of North Asia, e. g., the Siberian tribes, the Mongol and the Manchus. In ancient time the people were divided into clans. Families became family groups, which in turn formed clans. Each clan lived on a well-defined, jealously guarded territory, owning property in common and performing labor in common. Their ancient original beliefs were animism, totemism and shamanism which are still in evidence today.

### 3. Traditional Religions of the People

What is the primary religion of the Korean people? The answer cannot be easily given. There is no single dominant religion with which the people are definitely affiliated. The religious situation in Korea today is very perplexing and confusing. Nearly 60 years ago, a renowned Korean historian and educator, George L. G. PAIK, made this observation by quoting W. E. Griffis and J. S. Gale (p. 67): "It has often been said that Korea is a land without religion, . . . yet the Korean has never been without a deep-rooted conviction of the presence of spiritual beings."<sup>[4]</sup> Generally speaking, the religious life of the Korean people manifests itself in animistic shamanism, Buddhism, and the teaching of Confucius, Taoism and Christianity.

The idea of god is as old as the nation's history itself. The people considered themselves and their rulers to be descendants from heaven or God. This manifests itself in the worship of the sun, the east, mountains, and the color white, which can still be seen today. The concept of god and the idea of heaven have a close relationship, as in the tradition of China. The Korean national

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[4] George L. G. PAIK, *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea 1832-1910*, 1929, pp. 16f. See the helpful volume, *Corea: The Hermit Nation* by William Elliot Griffis, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920. Also *Korea in Transition* by James S. Gale, Eaton and Mains, 1909, 1970 pp., with many interesting photos.

anthem includes an interesting statement: "may the god of heaven protect our land for ten thousand years (**forever and ever**)."

The idea of **chun-jee shin-myung** (the divine will of heaven and earth) plays an important role among the people.

In connection with the religious life of the common people, we may first take note of shamanism which has been widely practiced by the people since their beginnings. Shamanism is a form of animistic nature worship consisting of a universal worship and fear of spirits. One of the traits of shamanism is the use of sorcerers who claim to drive out or coax out the evil spirits of disease and bad luck. In regard to shamanist practices, their worship of spirit trees and guardians of roads, their "honorable treatment" of smallpox and their funeral rites are notable.

### Buddhism in Korea

Around 372 A. D. Buddhism of Mahayana Branch or the Greater Vehicle was introduced to Korea through China. Its teachings began to spread first of all in the northern kingdom, KOKURYU, and gradually moved toward the southern kingdoms. Buddhism reached PAIKCHE in 384 A. D., and finally came to SILLA kingdom in the 5th century.<sup>[5]</sup> After the founding of some monasteries, Buddhism began to spread rapidly. In 392 it became the "official religion of the kingdom,"<sup>[6]</sup> or the "official religion of the court" in PAIKCHE Kingdom.<sup>[7]</sup> Splendid temples, great monasteries, bells, pagodas and Buddha figures were made. From Korea this religion extended its teachings to Japan. "It is from Korea (PAIKCHE) that Buddhism and its art were introduced to Japan in the sixth century."<sup>[8]</sup> During this time, when

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[5] Frederick Starr, *Korean Buddhism* (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1918), c. 1918, p. 18.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[7] Steiger, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

Buddhism was a state-supported institution, monks and priests also held high offices. The founder of the religion, Gautama Buddha, never held any high position nor desired any; nevertheless, his adherents often enjoyed a life of luxury, abandoning the true spirit of Gautama. Buddhism began to deteriorate as time went on; it became corrupt and consequently the people despised it, like salt which had lost its saltiness. True, in the last years of the Three Kingdoms Korean Buddhism was refined and artistic, impressive and beautiful, but it was in content more harmful than helpful.<sup>[8]</sup> Toward the end of the KORYU dynasty (918-1392 A. D.) and during the YI dynasty (1392-1910), the Buddhist monastic institutions were deprived of their vested privileges. Buddhism ceased to be the "official religion" of the kingdom. In place of Buddhism the cult or teaching of Confucius became the recognized religion. The early rulers of the YI dynasty realized that the abuse of Buddhism had been the chief cause of corruption and trouble in the previous dynasties. Despite such an eclipse in the history of Buddhism, many valuable religious objects survived. According to the statistics in 1931, there were 31 larger temples, 1,313 minor temples, 120 stations, 5,594 priests, 1,044 women priests, and 141,800 adherents on the Korean peninsula. Due to the division of the land it is very difficult to make a reliable estimation today.

Buddhism is not a religion which requires 'faith.' The entrance to this religion is actually through the Buddhist set-up (**bub-moun**) where enlightenment or nirvana is taught. Ordinarily it needs no ceremony or rites but only **cham-sun** (meditation). Its

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[8] A. D. Coomarsawamy, *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*, 1928, p. 339. H. Byron Earhart, *Religions of Japan*, Harper & Row, 1984, p. 27: "About the beginning of the Christian era, when Japanese culture was becoming more complex, the influence of continental Asian culture entered Japan by way of Korea."

[9] Starr, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

primary teaching on nirvana calls for the annihilation of the notion of the ego-substance and all carnal desires and passionate awareness. It also accents the positive side which is **jabi** (love or sympathy) for all beings. Buddhism is inclined to be pessimistic towards life and its practices; its outlook is monastic; its temperament is unemotional.

The influence of Buddhism in Korea is by no means to be ignored. It has penetrated into almost all phases of the people's life, including education and fine art. Buddhism has preserved a primitive animism and a fatalistic and passive attitude toward an active way of life among the people. In recent years, moreover, there have been signs of revitalization and modernization among the Buddhists in Korea. They have been trying to make their religion more relevant to the actual life of the people in society, not limiting it to the temples in the mountains. Also, it is apparent that considerable influence from the Christian churches and their methods of religious propagation have influenced the Buddhists and their work.

### Confucianism

At the time of the Three Kingdoms of Korea in the 6th century, there began a continuous flow of Chinese civilization into Korea. It came about mainly through the sending of princes and nobles as students to China. This practice continued during the YI dynasty, when King YI Tae-Jo also adopted the Chinese calendar. These facts illustrate the flow of Confucianism into Korea, which now provided the basic principles of life as well as educational principles and objectives. Through steady expansion Confucianism had come to rival Buddhism in Korea.

During the YI dynasty the cult of Confucius (ca. 551-479 B. C.), China's Plato, was officially made the recognized religion in place of Buddhism. The government fostered the study of the Confucian

Classics by establishing an official literary examination as a prerequisite for civil appointment. In Confucianism filial piety, benevolence, justice, propriety, intelligence and fidelity are cardinal virtues. Confucius formed an epoch, and must be regarded in a very real sense as the father of Chinese culture. The literary class in China and Korea was strongly influenced by Confucianism. It was a part of their very being. For them it was almost synonymous with what we call "civilization," but not religion in the usual sense. Confucius never created a priesthood or any monastic order such as we find among the Buddhists and Taoists. He never deified himself. Confucius and his disciples, like Meng-Tzu (Mencius) and others, refrained from entering into the question of religion and the afterlife. Not until the Han dynasty, 206 B. C.-220 A. D., (a proud period of expansion of China, first contact with "foreigners," influx of Buddhism, and the export of Chinese products to Europe) in China was the image of Confucius placed in a temple for the first time. Confucian schools were the centers of learning, and only what was taught in the Confucian Classics (Ta Hsüeh, Chung Yong, Lun Yü, Meng Tzu, I Ching, Shu Ching, Shih Ching, Li Chi, Chun Chiu) was learned by the students.

Confucianism has permeated every aspect of Korean life. The lives of the present writer and his immediate ancestors were no exception. Ancestor worship, for instance, has been a national practice throughout the centuries. The rites and traditions of this custom, according to Confucian philosophy and ordinances, are tied together with the teachings of filial piety. The funeral and its ceremonies are likewise connected with Confucian teaching. Although Confucianism in its classical form does not necessarily imply any dealings with the world of spirits or belief in a future life, it demands strict obedience and the keeping of the regulations and ceremonies of filial piety not only in this life but also after the death of one's parents. The customs surrounding ancestor worship



and the funeral rites became crucial points of conflict when Christianity was first introduced to Korea, and even until this day cause some tension. Marriage is considered a sacred part of life. Birth, marriage and death are always taken seriously. No one dares to dissolve a marriage. This is more true for the woman than for the man. Age and seniority must always be honored.

Confucianism in general is a reaction to another ancient religion, Taoism, a Chinese version of mysticism. Here a kind of parallel may be drawn between the relation of Hinduism and Buddhism on the one hand, and Taoism and Confucianism on the other hand, or even medieval Catholicism and Protestantism of the 16th century.

**Taoism**, which presumably originated with Lao-Tsu (ca. 604-ca. 531 B. C.), the master of the ancient Chinese mystics, has been a great influence in the religious life of the Korean people, especially in connection with the practice of shamanism. The TAO (Way, Reason, Word, Law) is known as the universal means, the first cause, the Self. The same word TAO is used by the Christians today and is the translation of "logos" in the Gospel of St. John, chapter 1. TAO is spirit and matter, cause and phenomenon. The world of senses is an illusion. TAO is the only reality, and both the individual person and the structure of society must be modeled on this great exemplar. Tao is supposed to be everywhere. It encompasses and sustains all things.

In the course of time **Taoism** came to incorporate all manner of popular usages and superstitions, as well as a few useful arts. Astrology and divination were pursued in sundry forms of which a peculiar kind of geomancy called POONG-SOO is perhaps the most significant. It is said to have originated about the beginning of the fourth century, when a magician named Kuo P'o professed to have been able to interpret the configuration of the earth in terms of good or bad luck. This mystical activity in Korea played an important part in ancestor worship. People go to a man called

the POONG-SOO (a professional name for geomancers or fortune tellers) to determine an auspicious place for the burial of their ancestors. They believe that the right location of the tomb, according to the geomancer, determines the wealth, good luck and prosperity of the descendants. The influence of Taoism on literature and art cannot be overestimated. It supplied just those elements of mystery, romance and color which are lacking in other cults and religions in Korea and China. It also gave rise to a great mass of family lore which stimulated the imagination of poets and painters alike.

We are talking about these religions and their thoughts because they formed the spiritual milieu and setting of Korea when Christianity was first introduced by the Roman Catholics and later by the Protestant denominations. From the very beginning the conflict between Christianity and the traditional religions in Korea was real and serious. Many Christians had to suffer martyrdom on account of it. Even today some areas of conflict can be seen. On the other hand, Christians are also influenced, either directly or indirectly, by these traditional religions and their practices. Serious students of the Christian mission in Korea should not overlook these religious phenomena.



## Chapter II

# Christianity in Korea

Korea's contact with the Christian faith has a long history involving many different people. All imaginable routes and means were tried, often sporadically without continuity of work or establishment of churches in a systematic manner. Publications on Korean church history have given some detailed accounts tracing the contacts with Christianity.<sup>[1]</sup> Some contacts with Christians were made in pre-modern times, e. g., during the Tang period of China, both through Mongolia and through Japan. However, these contacts had no more than a "romantic significance" without any lasting missionary results or historical importance.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 1. Roman Catholicism

In 1984 the Roman Catholic Church in Korea observed its

[1] Some publications can be mentioned: *The History of the Korean Church* by LEE Young-Hun (in Korean), 1978; *The Church History of Korea* by MIN Kyung-Bae (in Korean), 1972; *History of the Korean Church* by Allen D. Clark, 1961; *The Christians of Korea* by Samuel H. Moffett, 1962; *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910* by George L. J. PAIK, 1929; "Schism and Unity in the Protestant Churches of Korea" by Sung Chun CHUN, unpublished Ph. D. dissertation at Yale, 1955; two Korean books by KIM Yang-Sun: *History of the Korean Church in the Ten Years since Liberation* (1945-55), 1956; *A Brief History of the Korean Church*, Seoul, 1962; "Division and Reunion in the Presbyterian Church in Korea 1959-1968" by RO Bong Rin, unpublished Th. D. dissertation at Concordia Seminary, 1969. There are, in fact, many more items in Korean and in English related to the history of Korean Christianity.

[2] MIN. *op. cit.* p. 17.

bicentennial. The baptism of a 27-year-old Korean in February, 1784, a well-educated person of royal descent named LEE Seung-Hoon, marked the birth of the Korean Catholic Church. The baptism actually took place in Peking, China, where Lee had gone for study. The baptismal name "Peter" was given to him with the wish that the future Korean Catholic Church would be built upon this foundation. Upon his return to Korea in the following month he actively propagated the teachings of the new 'su-kyo' (Western Teaching) among his friends and acquaintances. From that beginning the number of Catholic Christians grew quickly at first. There were already some 4000 adherents in Korea before the first Chinese priest, CHOO Mun-Mo, got into the country in 1794. Thus the Roman Catholic mission in Korea started in a unique way: a Korean goes to a foreign country, is baptized there, and then returns to his native land and gains followers, before a foreign missionary enters the country to cultivate the ground for mission. The first Chinese missionary, CHOO, was martyred in Korea in April, 1801. The first western priest in Korea was a Frenchman, Father Pierre P. Maubount, who reached Seoul in 1836 after entering the country through a sewer drain in the city of Wiju on the Yalu River.

The early history of the Korean Catholic Church is a story of persecutions and martyrdom. The royal government of Korea tried to stamp out Chun-Ju-Kyo or Su-Kyo (the "religion of the master of heaven" or "religion of the West," referring to the Roman Catholic Church), because at that time Korea sought to exclude everything alien. However, they failed. The martyrs were said to be brave, composed at death, bold and dauntless.<sup>[3]</sup> We may divide the persecutions into three periods: the first was from 1800 to 1815 during the time of King Sunjo; the second was from 1838 to 1840 during the rule of Hyun-Jong; the third was in 1866-

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[3] W. Urakawa, *History of Martyrdom in Korea* (in Japanese), 1944, p. 2.

67 during the reign of Ko-Jong (known as Tai Won Koon), and was the worst of the three. By 1870 it was estimated that two Korean priests, seven missionaries and about 8000 laypeople had been martyred.<sup>[4]</sup> These persecutions came to an end when Korea finally opened its doors to the outside world in the 1870's and 1880's. It is estimated that there were then 12,500 Catholics in Korea.<sup>[5]</sup>

When the Presbyterians and Methodists began mission work in Korea in 1884/5, they were much indebted to the Roman Catholic Church for their efforts at opening up Korea. However, that debt is seldom recognized, perhaps in part because the long history of Catholic persecutions left a stigma against the Catholics in the minds of the Korean people, adding another dimension to the historic gap between the Protestants and Catholics. Furthermore, the two groups used different Korean names for God. The Catholics used **Chun-Ju** ("Lord of Heaven," based on the Chinese ideographs), while the Protestants used **Ha-na-nim**, the traditional Korean name for the Supreme Being. This contributed to a common impression among the people that Catholicism was a different religion from the "Christianity" of the Protestants. Because of the suspicion and lack of understanding on each side, there has been little contact between Protestants and Roman Catholics until quite recent times.

Today, the Korean Catholics boast of many churches, educational and social institutions and some 2,000,000 believers. They are growing and are increasingly active in both religious and secular realms of life. In May 1984, Pope John Paul II made a special visit to Korea in recognition of the courageous witness of the early Catholics. During his visit the Pope elevated 103 Korean martyrs to 'sainthood.' His warm personal presence and actions

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

[5] *Catholic Korea: Yesterday and Today* edited by Joseph Chang-min KIM and John Jae-sun CHUNG (Seoul: Catholic Korea Publishing Co., 1964), p. 313.

during his brief visit gave a boost to Korean Catholicism, contributing to numerical growth and to its positive image among the common people in Korea. Another contributing factor to the rapid growth of the Roman Catholics in Korea in recent times, it is said, has been the divisions, factions and related unpleasant happenings in the Korean Protestant churches.

## 2. Protestantism

The first Protestant clergy missionary to put his feet on Korean soil was a Lutheran. German missionary Karl Gützlaff went to Bangkok in 1828, and from there to the west coast of the "Hermit Kingdom" in the East, Korea, in 1832. He stayed in Korea for a month distributing Christian literature to the people under adverse circumstances. There were, in fact, other Protestant Christians who had stopped in Korea earlier than Rev. Gützlaff. Some examples include the Dutch navigator and "first Western author on Korea," Hendrik Hamel (1630-92), and his company who were evidently Dutch Presbyterians; and the Englishman Basil Hall (1788-1844), a naval officer and traveller who visited the western shore of Hwang-Hae Province in September of 1816, who brought the Scriptures, likely in Chinese. But the significance of Gützlaff is that he was the first theologically trained Protestant (and Lutheran!) missionary to visit the Korean peninsula. (We will take him up again later.)

Thirty-four years after Gützlaff's visit to Korea, a Scotsman, Rev. Robert J. Thomas, who had spent two and a half months in Hwang-Hae Province, joined a trading vessel, the *General Sherman*, and sailed up the Tai-Tong river to a point below the city of Pyong-Yang. The ship came in on an unusually high tide and became stranded below the city. After futile negotiations, the Koreans succeeded in setting fire to the ship. As the sailors and Thomas waded ashore, they were massacred by the people. At that

time, as at the time of Gützlaff, Korea was a "forbidden land." No foreigner was permitted to enter the country, for the land was completely "closed" to the outside world. Rev. Thomas was connected with the National Bible Society of Scotland and carried a supply of Bibles written in English and in Chinese. He had distributed many of these to the crowds along the banks on the way up the river. Even as he jumped into the water from the burning ship, he had an armful of Bibles. Before dying he succeeded in tossing some of these Bibles to the mob. Tens of thousands of Korean Christians in the ensuing years have praised this man's noble martyrdom and have followed his footsteps for the sake of Christ. Thus Rev. Thomas holds the honor of being the first Protestant martyr in Korea.

Protestant missions in Korea were started in an organized manner and with considerable manpower by the churches in the United States, which were later joined by Canadians and Australians. In 1884 the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions appointed Rev. J. W. Heron, M.D., and Horace N. Allen, M.D., as medical missionaries to Korea. Dr. Allen, a missionary diplomat, became an instrument in opening the gates of the Hermit Kingdom to the gospel of Jesus Christ. On the night of Dec. 4, 1884, scores of the king's counselors were murdered. The queen's nephew, prince MIN Yong-Ik, was also very seriously wounded. In their desperation the king and queen summoned physician Allen. For three months he struggled to save the prince's life. Failure would have meant the end of his work in Korea, but at last the prince recovered. The grateful king promptly appointed Allen as physician to the royal court and allowed him to open a hospital in Seoul sponsored by the government "in cooperation with a benevolent society in America." This occasion was more or less the first official approval by the Korean government of missionary work in Korea.

Dr. Allen was soon followed by resident clergy missionaries in

1885, namely: Rev. Horace G. Underwood (1859-1916), a Presbyterian, and Henry G. Appenzeller (1858-1902), a Methodist.

The work of missions since then has had phenomenal success.<sup>[6]</sup> The progress of mission work in Korea was unusually rapid owing to certain unique features of missionary policy and methods, the situation of Korea in general and the people's openness to the Christian message. National churches, instead of depending on foreign aid, quickly became self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating. An astonishing revival spirit and evangelistic zeal prevailed, and converts were gathered by scores and hundreds. Voluntary offerings were taken up for work among the unbelievers. Those who had little money pledged days of service for the church. This situation also prevailed during the Japanese annexation (1910-45) of Korea (see: Ch. I, 2 for Japan's rule over Korea). Not infrequently, this success has been attributed to the Nevius Method.<sup>[7]</sup> Factors which contributed to the rapid growth of the Christian church in Korea, mentioned by various writers, are as follows (my own summary):

[6] A. D. Mason, *Outline of Mission History*, c. 1929, p. 131.

[7] The "Nevius Method" comes from John L. Nevius (1829-1893), a Presbyterian missionary to the Shantung area of China, who developed his own method of missionary work. His method was adopted in June, 1890, while he was visiting the Presbyterians in Korea. The four cardinal points of this system were as follows:

- (1) Let each Christian be an individual worker for Christ and live Christ in his own neighborhood, supporting himself by his trade.
- (2) Develop any method and church machinery only so far as the national church is able to take care of and manage the same.
- (3) Set aside those who seem the better qualified to do evangelistic work among their neighbors.
- (4) Let the nationals provide their own church buildings in their architecture and style which the local church could afford to put up.

PAIK, *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 204, 206, 217, 281f. LEE, *op. cit.*, p. 94f. Under this method of work the Presbyterian mission and church stressed self-propagation, self-government, self-support, Bible study and missionary itineration with a Korean "helper."

- (1) at the time of the entry of Protestantism, the old religions in Korea had declined, leaving a kind of spiritual vacuum;
- (2) openness of the Koreans toward the new world, the West and its teachings;
- (3) uniformity of the Korean language which served to promote the spread of Christian literature as well as facilitate rapid communication;
- (4) a longing for relief and freedom from the pressures from outside;
- (5) the native spirituality of the people which was conducive to new religious teaching;
- (6) the promotion of a respectable status for women by Christianity;
- (7) the effectiveness in Christian education at all levels;
- (8) support for liberation from Japanese domination;

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John L. Nevius, *Methods of Mission Work*, Foreign Mission Library, 1895; C. A. Clark, *The Korean Church and the Nevius Methods*, 1930, 33-34; W. J. Kang, "The Nevius Methods: A Study and an Appraisal of Indigenous Mission Methods," CTM, XXXIV (1963), 335-42. MIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-161; LEE, *op. cit.*, pp. 94f. Most books related to Christian work in Korea treat the "Nevius Method."

The "Three Self" idea itself was not new. In the early 1860s two prominent mission leaders, Rufus Anderson (1796-1880, American) and Henry Venn (1796-1873, British) proposed a plan whereby young churches would gain their independence on the basis of three principles: self-propagating, self-governing and self-supporting (cf. the book by W. R. Shenk, *Henry Venn*, 1983). These were widely debated and adopted by many mission agencies as their guidelines for establishing autonomous churches. In recent years the government of the People's Republic of China has been promoting the so-called "Three Self Patriotic Movement" among the religions in China, including Christianity. Another interesting new development among the churches and missiologists in Asia, Africa and Latin America is the idea of "self-theologizing" in indigenous terms and thought-patterns. Some people, like missionary anthropologist Paul G. Hiebert (1985), named it the "Fourth Self." Much discussion along these lines took place in the KLM circle in its early years. It once concluded the following as the true basic factors of "Self," namely, thinking oneself, expressing oneself, planning oneself, deciding oneself, acting oneself, and assuming one's responsibilities. The most important is "thinking oneself." See KLM Minutes, 64-27.



- (9) desire for peace, prosperity, happiness, blessings, future life;
- (10) the king's favor to Christianity, unlike the time of Gützlaff's visit in 1832.

The wholehearted enthusiasm of the Koreans for Protestant Christianity manifested itself in many phases of the mission enterprise. The rapid growth of the church was remarkable. Just 28 years after the first American missionaries landed, the Korean churches started foreign mission work in Shantung Province of China, sending three missionary families. In everyday life, Christianity has made the people see that it is not ideal to retire from and renounce all mundane affairs in becoming religious. Instead, the Christian is one who practices his religion while living an ordinary life on earth. A Christian ethic along Calvinistic and pietistic lines was gradually developed. Christians of Korea, then, were practical as well as spiritual. They believed that Christianity was not merely a set of dogmas. For them religion was realistically practical in their life, and was also a way of life, a new way of living. The people were attracted by many features of Christianity, such as its educational, medical and social work.

The above is merely a brief comment on Korean Protestantism in its early years. Numerous history books<sup>[8]</sup> may easily fill in the details which are beyond the scope of this work. One thing which we must have, however, is a clear grasp of the post-World War II situation of Korean Christendom in order to understand some of the reasons behind the particular mission approach of the Korea Lutheran Mission. The two decades immediately following the

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[8] There are many books available in both English and Korean. The following can be mentioned: *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910*, George L. J. PAIK, 1929; *History of the Korean Church*, Allen D. Clark, 1961; *The Christians of Korea*, Samuel H. Moffett, 1962; *The Church History of Korea* (in Korean), Kyung Bae MIN, 1972; *The History of the Korean Church* (in Korean), Young Hun LEE, 1978; *Protestant Pioneer in Korea*, Everett Hunt, 1980 (It is No.1 in the American Society of Missiology Series edited by William J. Danker). There are many more.



liberation of Korea from Japan, 1945-65, were a period of struggle in many respects for the churches in Korea. For this reason, the following two sections may not only shed light on certain aspects of the KLM but also on the present struggle of the Lutheran Church in Korea.

### 3. An Analysis of Korean Protestantism, 1945-1965

Korean Protestantism has countless mission episodes and spectacular success stories. Historians and missiologists have given it generous compliments. On the other hand, it is not without its problems and shortcomings.<sup>[9]</sup>

From their inception towards the end of the 19th century, the Protestant Churches of Korea have been generously praised and eulogized for their rapid growth as well as for the fine training of their adherents in the Biblical truth. Mission writers have paid glowing tribute to the Korean Church. Professor William J. Danker commented in his book in 1964:

The Korean Church has steel in its backbone. It has been tempered in the fires of severe persecutions under the Japanese and under the Communists. Thousands of martyrs, including many hundreds of pastors, have shed Christian blood for the testimony of Christ. The Church has been strong in Bible study ... The dawn prayer meetings at each local Church have been a daily source of spiritual strength. The Church has been strong in evangelism. Through the years people would each pledge so many days of evangelistic preaching.<sup>[10]</sup>

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[9] Cf. the "Foreword" to *Korea Struggles for Christ*, Memorial Symposium for the Eightieth Anniversary of Protestantism in Korea, edited by Harold S. HONG, Won Yong JI, and Chung Choon KIM, Christian Literature Society of Korea, Seoul, Korea, 1966. This is a volume which includes articles in English written by Korean scholars. The "Foreword" was written by Won Yong JI, then the chairman of the Editorial Board of the Christian Literature Society of Korea.

[10] William J. Danker, *Two Worlds or None* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p. 264.

The renowned anthropologist, Yale University Professor Cornelius Osgood, has this to say concerning the impact of Christianity on Korea: "The success of these missions in Korea was phenomenal, bringing Christianity into a position of importance unequaled in any other Oriental country of high indigenous civilization."<sup>[11]</sup>

Historically there were various factors which helped make the Protestant Christian mission so remarkably successful. First of all, the Roman Catholic Church, which had been in Korea for a century before the advent of any Protestant denomination, did preparatory work. Second, the people at that time were attracted by various features of Christianity. "Korean youth," for example, "flocked to the missions not only in search of religious truth but also because these missions represented American democracy in a land of serfdom. Their churches, schools, hospitals and leper homes have often offered the only ray of light to many Koreans."<sup>[12]</sup> Other conditions as well were favorable to Christian mission work and its progress.

The Korean churches enjoyed days of plenty until the end of World War II, even though they often worked under adverse conditions during the Japanese occupation. However, the churches were not ready for new challenges. The exuberant songs of liberty and freedom which echoed throughout Korea on August 15, 1945, were accompanied by certain discordant notes. Few could grasp the tenor and significance of the time. Storms, both internal and external, arose in the Christian churches. The peace and unity of Korean Christendom seemed at an end. It is an embarrassing task to discuss the post-1945 Christian churches in Korea. The

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[11] Cornelius Osgood, *The Koreans and Their Culture* (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1951), p. 251.

[12] A. J. Graidanzev, *Modern Korea* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1944), p. 175.

[13] Among many, the following books may be recommended for reading: Samuel H. Moffett, *The Christians of Korea* (New York: Friendship

interpretation of the situation which faced them is even more difficult.<sup>[13]</sup>

Upon liberation from Japanese colonialism in 1945, the worst storm to hit the Korean Church was the issue of Japanese Shinto Shrine worship.<sup>[14]</sup> The church leaders were divided regarding the Church's rehabilitation. The approaches made to reform the Church varied from moderate to extreme. Who should be condemned for the sin of bowing at Shinto Shrines under the Japanese? Should punishment be meted out? To what extent should "self-cleansing" be recognized? These were very serious and complicated matters. On the one side were those leaders who either fled persecution by leaving Korea or who resisted with imprisonment. On the other hand there were those who remained in the country and took circumstances as they came, even if it meant compromise. Not only did the resisters and conformists clash, but even those who were on the same side did not agree. Leaders "with a clean record" were sought throughout the land. Who could cast the first stone at the churches and the leaders who had sinned so gravely? The situation resulted in confusion, conflict, division, spiritual arrogance and loss of self-confidence.<sup>[15]</sup>

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Press, 1962). Allen D. Clark, *History of the Korean Church* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1961). Roy E. Shearer, *Wildfire: Church Growth in Korea* (Eerdmans, 1966). Spencer J. Palmer, *Korea and Christianity* (Hollm: Royal Asiatic Society, 1967); and other books mentioned in this volume.

[14] The overall situation of Korean Christendom, including the Shinto Shrine problem, is informatively treated in the following works: Yang-sun KIM, *History of the Korean Church, in the ten years since liberation (1945-1955)*, translated from Korean by Allen D. Clark (Seoul, n. d.). Also see Clark's work *History of the Korean Church*, 1961. Sung-chun CHUN, "Schism and Unity in the Protestant Churches of Korea," unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1955, pp. 164ff.

[15] Yang-sun KIM, *op. cit.*, pp. 24ff.  
Moffett, *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 27.

The second storm was ideological and it resulted from the sudden influx of conflicting philosophies of life such as democracy, communism, modernism, fundamentalism and existentialism. It usually takes time and patience to digest new thoughts properly. The churches were not ready. In addition, the Communist invasion on June 25, 1950, was a tragedy unprecedented in the history of the nation. The war took an immeasurable physical and spiritual toll. In many respects the churches bore the brunt of the relentless war. Certainly, the Korean War brought countless problems as well as many martyrs and bold Christian witnesses.

Various mission groups from overseas made the situation even more complicated rather than alleviating it. Missionary groups (missions) often contributed to ecclesiastical schism either directly or indirectly.<sup>[16]</sup>

In the days of crisis during and after the Korean War (1950-53) a new situation developed in Korean Christendom. Confusion and factionalism among the established churches, the decline of morals in society, and constant political and economic instability all helped to bring about a tragic state of mind, i. e., a mental and spiritual vacuum among the people. A vacuum must be filled. People look for a faith or a religion which provides answers for their physical, mental and spiritual needs.

The established churches during these years were in a state of weakness. They were unable to serve the masses and to alleviate

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[16] Behind the ecclesiastical schism, there are certain issues with an historical background which originated in the sending churches in the United States, e. g., the controversy between the liberal side and the conservative side in the churches which was later transplanted to Korea. Dr. Chun describes the basic causes of the schism in the Protestant Churches (particularly the Presbyterian Church) of Korea prior to 1945 to be twofold: "dogmatism and depression" and the factors "primarily theological and economic." CHUN, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-72, 82, 86, 92-94, 149-152, 202ff. Yang-sun KIM, *op. cit.*, Chapter III: "Church Leadership and Denominational Division."

life's problems. Just when the churches were weak, the people were constantly demanding a more dynamic message and new answers with greater relevance to the predicaments they were facing.

Together with the spiritual vacuum, the Korean people entered into a cultural vacuum brought about by complex changes after 1945.<sup>[17]</sup> Due to powerful external influences the people had a hard time trying to be themselves. It became the task of the time to restore humanity to people alienated by a gradually developing technological age with its complex machines and systems. Isolation can be the most horrible punishment in a small country like Korea. Each man wants to belong to and needs to be identified with a recognized circle. The restoration of one's own identity as a dignified human being is the first step toward the task of liberating an estranged humanity. This is an important task assigned to religion. Nevertheless, the established churches in Korea at that time failed in this very significant area of service. As a result, there arose problems and "heresies" (such as many pseudo-Christian and other religious sects).<sup>[18]</sup>

The thoughtful saying that the church is not of the world but it is in the world certainly applies to the churches in Korea. The conditions prevailing in the Christian churches in Korea at the time were a reflection of society: when society was in confusion so were the churches. But the churches were expected to transform the world, not conform to it. It was precisely in this respect that the churches were weak. Their teachings were not strong enough to meet the problems of the time. Consequently their effectiveness diminished and their spirituality declined. Just as anemia leads to all kinds of sicknesses, so the doctrinal and

[17] Cf. Ha-tai KIM, "The Korean Church in Cultural Upheaval" (in Korean), *Studies of Christian Thought* (Seoul: Christian Literature Society, 1963), Vol. III, 313.

[18] Cf. Danker, *op. cit.*, p. 273.

administrative weaknesses of the churches led to some negative consequences. The multiplication of new religious sects (sects: *sa-i-bi jong pa*=pseudo Christian and other religious cults) was a natural outcome.

Many domestic writers expressed the view that intellectual weakness resulted in a lack of intelligent judgment, and led to the rise of emotionalism and sentimentalism.<sup>[19]</sup> The docile nature of the people has often led them to accept what was given without proper analysis. Such a lack of judgment sometimes resulted in both flunkysism and crass nationalism.

Furthermore, the lack of sound theology also created many serious problems. The Korean churches were not strong enough to defend their position against the rising tide of sects. The churches were found to be lacking creeds, confessions, and theology, accusing each other of being liberal or conservative or modernistic or fundamentalistic, but they seemed not to know clearly what these terms really meant. An American theologian representing a conservative denomination, after lecturing in Korea for several months during 1964, commented that as far as he could see there was very little 'theological' basis for church splits in Korea. He felt that strong personality factors existed. Group A accused Group B, according to this observer, of the very same faults of which Group C accused Group A, and such vicious circles were indeed prevalent.

Sects were cropping up along with the demands and desires of the times. These demands were nurtured by the anxiety, the poverty, the corruption, and the various forms of social upheaval that accompany or closely follow the aftermath of war or revolution. Following are some of the phenomena which Korean Christendom experienced during those years, some of which still

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[19] Yung-soo KIM, "Heresy and Orthodoxy," *Dong-A Ilbo*, a Korean daily (Feb. 7-8, 1959). CHUN, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-146.



exist today.

1) Seeking something radically new: Many Christians yearned for a type of religion which had new and striking religious rites and a dramatic message. Conventional ways were not satisfying. A combination of fanatic evangelistic revival, often accompanied by faith healing, and an emphasis on improving people's livelihood upset the equilibrium of the churches with more traditional methods of evangelization.

2) Seeking something mysterious: The mystical tendencies of Korean Christians made them susceptible to the new sects and led them into spiritual fantasy. The self, mystically united with God, is not content without an unusual revelation. The emotion-intoxicated sentimentalist looked for spiritual ecstasy.<sup>[20]</sup> Looking for miracles, especially miracles of healing, was another form of demand.

3) Seeking something concrete: In interpreting the Holy Scriptures, many Christians sought to understand the message in a more concrete and literalistic sense so as to make it applicable to the individual's daily life.

4) The tendency to be egocentric: What religion can do for oneself was of primary concern. People asked for immediate results rather than for a greater reward in the far-distant future. Such impatient anticipation of the fulfillment of one's wishes led many to listen to any new religious teaching which promised to satisfy personal demands and the desire for happiness. In this respect people were very secular and irreligious. Liberation from poverty was a dominant factor for those who eagerly listened to the teachings of the sects in Korea.

5) Seeking to be strong and impressive: This tendency prompted people to follow a dynamic force, either physical or

[20] Chae-choon KIM, "Beware of the Misleading Sects," *Social Evil and Heretical Movements* (in Korean), edited by Kyoung-rai KIM (Seoul: Ki Moon Sa, 1957), p. 104.

spiritual, which could satisfy their needs. Such people, including members of established churches, were interested in any new sect which promised to grow big and powerful.

6) The inclination to be nationalistic: Along with a general tendency in the newly rising religious sects during that time, the people in the church were becoming increasingly nationalistic. In fact, indigenous sects represent a form of nationalism with religious ingredients.

The churches have also been criticized for being secular; that is, greedy for power, partisan and tainted with corruption. They were making numerical progress but retrogressing in quality.<sup>[21]</sup>

A statement issued by the Korean National Christian Council in July 1955 reads:

... Our people, under the distress of a refugee situation unparalleled in history, spiritually and materially, lost all appearance of normalcy. Many things in society in general are in confusion and in the religious field, even within the Christian Church, not only are false teaching and heresy current, but everywhere there is abnormal religious activity making a troubled society yet more troubled, in a country devastated by War. . .<sup>[22]</sup>

Christian activities were too often confined to church compounds. The social application of Biblical truth was weak and even negligible. Various commentators have noted the lack of

[21] The following works are consulted:

Yun-kuk KIM, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-103.

Yang-sun KIM, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

Sha-hoon SHIN, *Criticism on Both Heresies and Modern Age and Our Living Road* (in Korean) (Seoul: Christian Culture Press, 1957), pp. 11-13.

Kyoung-rai KIM, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 151.

Jong-sung RHEE, "Why Are the Presbyterians Divided?" *Christian Thought*, a Korean theological monthly (Nov. 1960).

[22] Yang-sun KIM, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

[23] Yun-kuk KIM, *op. cit.*, p. 101.



social concern in the churches, especially in post-war Korea.<sup>[23]</sup> Did the church take no interest in social issues? Or did she merely suffer from a lack of material means to put into practice its concern for such problems? Both seemed to be true.

The strength of the church, furthermore, was sapped by splits and schisms. United efforts could not be easily realized.

... Ever since the war in 1950, the Korean Church has been struck with a plague of virulent schisms that have hurt her far more than any Communist invasion. Presbyterians have split into four rival factions. The Methodists have divided twice, but are successfully reunited again. Both the Baptists and Holiness Church have been pulled apart by factional disputes.<sup>[24]</sup>

According to the statistics in 1964 on the Korean Protestant churches,<sup>[25]</sup> there were 12 Presbyterian groups, three Methodist groups, two Holiness groups and five Baptist groups. Churches and missions had done great work in building up the church membership, but they had done too little to develop the maturity of Korean Christendom through sound theological education.

The increasing number and influence of religious sects in these years were a special challenge to the churches. They even presented a form of social unrest. Some groups were so obscure that they could hardly be identified by their particular teachings. Nevertheless, others were large and exerted a great influence. A great number of their constituents and leaders were dissidents from the existing churches in Korea.

No period in history seems to be without religion and religious sects. In the early 1960s Korea had a great profusion of sects with both Christian and non-Christian origins.<sup>[26]</sup> It was estimated that

[24] Moffett, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

[25] Sang-yong LEE, ed., *The Yearbook of Korean Protestant Churches* (in Korean) (Seoul, 1964), pp. 117-119.

[26] Duk-whang KIM, *History of Korean Thought* (in Korean) (Seoul: Nam San Dang, 1958), pp. 210-227. Duk-whang KIM, *History of Religion in*

there were more than 200 sects or pseudo-religious groups in Korea. More than 1,000 leaders representing 30 of these sects gathered in Seoul on November 19, 1964, to seek ways to form an association of these non-Christian sects.<sup>[27]</sup>

Socio-economic factors often play a dominant role in the formation of religious sects. Felix Moos, an anthropologist, considered Elder Pak's Olive Tree sect in Korea as a kind of revitalization and one of the efforts at social action.<sup>[28]</sup> This sect formed "Christian Towns" in which all participants' resources were used for building communal housing and for establishing job-producing enterprises such as factories. Such phenomena are also evident in Japan and in the Philippines. SOKAGAKKAI in Japan<sup>[29]</sup> and IGLESIA NI CHRISTO (Church of Christ) in the Philippines<sup>[30]</sup> are strikingly similar to some of the religious sects in Korea.

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*Korea* (in Korean) (Seoul: Hai Moon Sa, 1963), pp. 473-490.

[27] *Han Kook Ilbo*, a daily newspaper (November 10, 1964).

[28] A lecture on the Elder Tae-sun PAK movement was delivered by Dr. Felix Moos at a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society on November 18, 1964, in Seoul. Elder PAK's Group, commonly known as the "Olive Tree" cult or "Elder PAK's Chondokwan" (evangelization house), was one of the pseudo-Christian cults that flourished after the Korean War. Cf. Dr. SHIN's book referred to above.

[29] "Sokagakkai" in Japan is the most well-known new religion in that land. Even in Korea, especially in the Taegu area, there are thousands of adherents to this sect. Numerous reference materials are available in English. Cf. Harry Thomsen's *The New Religions of Japan*. R. Okamoto's article "Japan" in *Look* (Sept. 10, 1963). *The Asia Magazine* (Oct. 18, 1964), "Fanning the Fire of a Fervent Faith." Ki-young LEE, "Background of Sects" (in Korean), *Shin Se Ke* (Feb. 1964).

[30] "Iglesia ni Cristo" is a nationalistic religious group of Christian origin in the Philippines founded by Felix Manalo in 1914. Albert J. Sanders, *A Protestant View of the Iglesia ni Cristo* (Quezon City: Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, 1962). Enlightening comments on the "Iglesia ni Cristo" are made in W. J. Danker's book, *Two Worlds Or None*, pp. 128-130.

Opinions concerning the Christian sects in Korea are numerous and varied.<sup>[31]</sup> These sects are harmful because of certain negative effects they have produced, yet they are an indication of what the established churches have lacked. The existence of these sects is symptomatic of people's needs. They are making a significant impact upon the minds of many people. To sum up, these sects have some common characteristics, namely: they are syncretistic, subjectivistic and other-worldly — and at the same time quite materialistic.

History teaches that in times of peace (without persecution) in Christendom, theological unrest and disputes usually arise along with spiritual deficiency and corruption. The Christian Church under Emperor Constantine in the fourth century, for example, enjoyed a period of peace and freedom. During and after the time of Constantine, a number of theological disputes arose. Consequently, a number of ecumenical church councils had to convene. Due to these controversies the great expositions of the church fathers of the Nicene Period could be made. With pure and noble intentions, Christians longing for a more pious life entered the monasteries in the Middle Ages. In the course of time, however, a spiritual egotism developed in the monasteries. Out of a pious life and orthodoxy easily spring pride, a self-centered life and self-righteousness.

Korean Christendom, similarly, after liberation in 1945, had religious freedom but she had to pass through periods of agony.

The conflicts, disputes and competition in Korean Christendom could be signs of healthy growth. It was a difficult time that challenged church leaders to respond with a renewed sense of dedication and determination. The prominent thinker and historian Will Durant, the author of the magisterial work, *The Story*

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[31] The following books are noteworthy: SHIN, *op. cit.*; Kyoung-rai KIM *op. cit.*

of *Civilization*, supposedly once made this thought-provoking remark: A religion is at its best when it must live with competition; it tends to intolerance when and where it is unchallenged and supreme.

The problems outlined above are not merely signs of weakness in the churches. They can also be, if considered positively, an opportunity for serious reform of the churches. Self-examination can turn a time of trouble into a time of spiritual renewal. Such a renewal requires a fresh study of the Scriptures and of the real nature of the church. The churches need to rediscover their forgotten *credo*, the content of faith. Emphasis on confessions will counter sectarianism; but stressing *credo* is not contrary to true ecumenicity. True ecumenical and confessional emphases go together.

#### 4. Korean Christendom Today

An accurate, objective assessment of Korean Protestant Christendom in the past quarter century is an extremely difficult, almost impossible, task. Only some general observations on the basis of certain outstanding phenomena are feasible here.

There are possibly two images of Korean Christendom known within and without Korea itself. First, there are the active, vibrant, committed, self-sacrificing Christians who flock into the church on each Sunday morning, Sunday evening and Wednesday evening; attend the early dawn prayer meeting, the Friday "all-night" vigil gathering, and the circuit meeting; and visit the prayer houses in the mountains. Many instances of active stewardship, evangelism, family visits, and the like can be mentioned. The outside world sees huge churches like Yong-Nak Presbyterian Church in Seoul, which started mostly with refugees from the north after the end of WW II, and the Full Gospel Church (Assemblies of God) at Yoido Island which claims to have 500,000 members. Casual

visitors and tourists from the Christian world outside look at them with amazement and admiration. It is true that Korean Protestantism has grown rapidly in the past decades. It numbers some eight million in a country with 41 million people (in the south only). It has tremendous potential for the advancement of the Christian message to the un-Christianized parts of the world.

There is however a second image as well. Korean Christendom, especially Protestantism, has many problems. Many Korean authors remind us of these. The foremost problem of Korean Protestantism is the matter of divisions and splits within denominations. This is especially noticeable among the Presbyterians, possibly due to the large size of that denomination (more than half of the entire Christian population of Korea). It is hard to estimate accurately the exact number of the church bodies and theological schools with the name 'Presbyterian.' The problem of divisiveness persists in other denominations as well. Several years ago, the Korean Government took special action to close many so-called "theological seminaries without proper licensing." They used to number more than a hundred. No one could really figure out how many theological seminaries actually were in existence (cf. *Korea Times*, Nov. 19, 1980 and June 24, 1981). Many protested this governmental action, others ignored it in the name of religious freedom. As a result of all this the image of the theological institutions suffered. Except for the accredited theological seminaries (about 25), the standard of the schools is actually very low. Consequently, the churches have taken in a flood of ill-trained clergy, among whom a lack of Christian 'ethic' is frequently evident: self-centeredness, lack of integrity, desire for personal aggrandizement and material gain. Such things were almost unthinkable among the Korean Christians in earlier days. Indeed, materialism has crept deeply into the churches. Law and Gospel must be preached in clarity and forcefulness also in Korea. Korean Christendom, in a serious sense, needs a second

reformation. In the midst of acclaim for rapid church growth and religious fervor, the Korean church has tended to lose the love and savour of Christ to which it one time gave first priority.

The year 1984 was the "Year of Christianity" in Korea — the centennial of Protestantism and the bicentennial of Roman Catholicism. Many anniversary programs and events were held. Eulogies were given for the saints and martyrs over the course of two centuries; the rapid numerical growth of the churches was noted with thanksgiving and amazement. On the other hand, a number of serious-minded Christians expressed their concern for the many grievous problems in the Korean Church, such as external expansion with little internal solidarity; numerical growth at the expense of the real savour of Christianity; clerical and ecclesiastical authoritarianism; self-centered practice of **ki-bok** (prayer-blessing)-oriented **quid pro quo** dealing with God (a "prosperity gospel"); and secular-sacred dichotomy. Christians should seek to live in accord with the theology of the cross in terms of personal piety, worship, pastoral care, administration of the sacraments, true Christian stewardship and missions. Korean Christendom indeed has tremendous potential in numbers, in commitment, and in active evangelistic outreach and missions, which can be a great stimulus and resource for the churches in Asia and elsewhere in the world.

The church scene in Korea today may also be cited as an example of the neo-pentecostal movement today. At one time a stronghold of Calvinism, Korean churches are more and more leaning to charismatic tendencies. They are consciously engaging in what they call a "Spirit-movement," characterized by speaking in tongues, healing, going to prayer halls and "mountain-prayer" and fasting. In seminary classrooms Calvinism is taught, but at the parish level Arminianism, Zwinglianism and spiritualism are frequently practiced. Many Christian leaders and theologians in Korea have begun to express grave concerns. The so called

**sungryeong oondong** (lit. Spirit-movement) is a peculiar religious phenomenon which reflects the present social, political, religious and spiritual milieu. Behind much of the phenomenal growth of the churches in Korea is this enthusiastic Pentecostal movement and its ferment. How to lead this general tendency in the right direction is a serious task for Korean Church leaders.

What are some of the reasons for the rapid rise of **sungryeong oondong** today? Firstly, it seems to stem from a sense of frustration with the traditional denominations. Secondly, viewing the phenomenon more positively, it gives expression to a rediscovery of the task of the church, with stress on the 'renewal' of the church and Christian life; in some instances it parallels liturgical renewal, Bible study movements, and a call for better pastoral care; and it tries to make the Holy Spirit and His work more authentic and visible. Thirdly, people want to **experience** religion. In fact, one common denominator of the diverse movement is **experience**. Lastly, people want to **participate** in prayer, in worship, in religious action and behavior, and in religious expression.

In order to see the Korean charismatic movement in clearer perspective it may be necessary to do more serious study of the history and practices of "shamanism." This is a task which some scholars have undertaken but much remains to be done.<sup>[32]</sup> Today some people consider shamanism and its practices as a part of the traditional cultural heritage of Korea. One finds many familiar phenomena of traditional shamanism in the Korean Christian charismatic movements, as well as in the mainstream of church life. Interestingly, in the early days of Christian missions in Korea

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[32] Profs. Sang-Hee MOON and Tong-Sik RYU have done considerable study on shamanism during the last few decades. Also cf. the results of a seminar on the syncretization of shamanism with "Korean Christianity" as reported in *Han Kook Ilbo*, May 23, 1978. More materials have appeared in recent years.

the people used to call the Christian evangelist a "Western Shaman." After Christianity has passed through the stages of 'introduction' in a place like Korea and later reaches the stage of 'indigenization' (contextualization), the rest of the Christian world may be surprised at the result, a surprise which may also raise disturbing questions.

In Christianity, as in the case of other religions, there is a sophisticated tradition with developed theology as well as a folk tradition with emotional and frequently "shamanistic" popular practices. An interesting analogy may be made with the phenomenon of the orthodox Muslims vs. folk Muslims (Sufism) in the Islamic world.<sup>[33]</sup> This same type of contrast is made in the area of Christian pneumatology: the traditional orthodox understanding of the 'Spirit' and the folk practices in regard to the Spirit. This tension between orthodox Christianity and folk Christianity<sup>[34]</sup> is an area, particularly in Lutheran theology, which

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[33] Cf. Phil. Parshall, *Bridges to Islam, A Christian Perspective on Folk Islam*, Baker, 1983.

[34] "Folk Christianity" represents those who have a more mystical orientation to religion (Christianity), depending on the more spectacular works of the Holy Spirit, on unusual experiences of joy and religious excitement, and on some type of visible relationship with the unfathomable God. Folk Christians are more inclined to the above trends than to the traditional doctrinal truths of orthodox Christianity. Frequently they exercise shamanistic practices, and the preacher (minister) often plays (in the minds of the believers) the role of a 'shaman,' a psychopomp, healer, etc.

In the context of contemporary Korean Christianity, a specially noteworthy aspect is the deep-seated notion of ancient "folk religion" and its customs and practices which have been absorbed and adapted into Korean Christian life. For example, there is a relation between the Christian "spirit world" where a pastor spends a week of prayer, fasting, and communing with nature at a "prayer hall," almost always located in a rather isolated mountain or hill spot — and traditional Korean religious beliefs and expectations. Also one may notice the custom of funerals in Korea. What elements have been absorbed and taken over, and not



needs much more thorough exploration and study. Such a study would help us to grasp the real meaning and significance of the increasing number of new indigenous independent churches and sects in Asia, Africa and Latin America, as well as the growing neo-Pentecostal tendency in Korea. With the help of such study we might resolve some of the tensions and gain a better understanding of the situation in Korea. Religious pluralism, however, will always be there. It presents a challenge, perhaps until the end of the world.

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necessarily after having been "baptized into Christ," from Buddhist/Confucian/Animistic backgrounds and beliefs? There is quite a mixture and variety of influences. The relation of traditional Korean culture in Christian practices is an area which needs to be more fully explored. An interesting analogy may also be made with the "spirit world" of Luther's time and his understanding and reaction to it.

- [35] Missionary Maynard Dorow made the following evaluation, in retrospect of the situation in 1958 (cf. Documentation VIII).

"There are two aspects of the situation at the outset which I think are significant for. . . the development of. . . the Lutheran Church in Korea. One is the fact that the church of Korea, a Bible-centered, evangelistic-minded church, was dominated by a theological outlook shaped by Calvinism. . .

"For all its positive dynamism as a church, which early on attained the goals of self-propagation, self-government, and self-support, the Korean church was typically Calvinist in its strong strain of legalism, its low view of the church and sacraments, and its fundamentalist view of Scripture. As the Lutheran Church developed, its way of confessing the faith in Korea could not but take into account the fact that the Lutheran Church was a small fish in a largely Calvinist ocean.

"The second aspect of the Korean situation in 1958 which affected the outlook of the newly arrived Lutheran representatives was the unsettled character of the Korean church. The Korean War of 1950-1953 had left Korea impoverished and in shock. A homogeneous people for more than 4000 years had seen their nation divided, the north now under the domination of communist ideology and the south attempting to adapt to a democratic system of government. . .

"In addition to the social and economic disarray of the post-war years, the Korean church had to deal with the arrival of a host of sectarian

The final sections of this rather lengthy chapter present the context in which the KLM began and its successor, the LCK, is now struggling to carry on the work. A clear understanding of this situation is essential for making a valid evaluation of the Lutheran work and its *raison d'être* in Korea.<sup>[35]</sup>

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denominations. Prior to World War II Korea was acquainted only with the Presbyterian, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Seventh Day Adventist and Salvation Army churches. Now came the Baptist, Nazarene, Church of God, Church of Christ, Assembly of God, and other groups from the United States. And in more than a few instances these new missions rather freely took in dissident pastors and splinter groups of Christians, taking advantage of a situation in which, for some people at least, physical needs and the rebuilding of churches took precedence over denominational loyalties. Thus the arrival of the Lutheran Church in 1958, among the last in the line of Christian denominations to enter Korea, was greeted on the one hand by dissident opportunist groups as a chance for a fresh start and some financial assistance for their struggling congregations; and on the other hand by the main-line denominations with the question: Will the Lutheran Church merely add to the confusion and to the weakening of the church's witness through divisive and 'sheep-stealing' activities?"

## Chapter III

### Contact with Lutheranism

#### 1. First Contact: Karl F. A. Gützlaff

A prominent Korean historian and educator, Dr. L. George PAIK (also known as Nak-chun PAEK), wrote his Ph. D. dissertation in 1927 at Yale University under the title: "The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910." It is significant to note that he took the beginning of the Protestant work in Korea from the year of the visit (1832) of German Lutheran missionary Karl Friedrich August Gützlaff (1803-51) who was, in the words of PAIK, "the first Protestant missionary to visit the [Korean] peninsula."<sup>[1]</sup> Gützlaff, also known as the "first Lutheran missionary to China,"<sup>[2]</sup> spent over a month in

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[1] Paik's dissertation was done under Kenneth S. Latourette and presented to the Department of History of Religion in the Graduate School of Yale University in the U. S. See pp. 38-41. His work was then published by Union Christian College Press, Pyeng Yang, Korea, 1929, 438 pages, Index: I-XIII, and a map.

[2] On the question of whether or not Gützlaff was a "Lutheran," this affirmative reference by Herman Schlyter in his book *Der China-Missionar Karl Gützlaff und Seine Heimatbasis*, 1976, p. 7, is specially noteworthy. Schlyter is the foremost authority on Gützlaff as far as the present writer can determine after much research on the writings about Gützlaff in German and English. The following sources are recommended for interested readers on the same question: "Lutheran Foreign Missions" by George Drach in *Our Church Abroad*, edited by George Drach, Lutheran Book Concern, 1926, p.19; *Who was Who in Church History*, Elgin Sylvester Moyer, Moody Press, 1962, pp. 181f.; "Gützlaff, Karl F. A." in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed., 1977;

Korea during the reign of King Soun-Jo (1800-34) distributing Christian literature translated into Chinese. He talked to the Korean people about the Gospel of Jesus Christ during his second voyage along the coast of China in 1832. At this time Gützlaff, a German employee of the British Colonial Service in Hong Kong, tried to lead the advancement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His goal was rapid evangelization with itinerant preaching rather than parish outreach through long-term education in literacy, social service, and biblical indoctrination in depth. According to his diary written on July 17, 1832, a "stiff breeze" brought him and his company in the English Ship "Lord Amherst" (Captain Rees, Commander) to the west coast of Korea. Gützlaff also undertook a translation of the Lord's Prayer into Korean which can correctly be regarded as the first translation of a part of the Bible into Korean. This was 52 years before the arrival of Horace N. Allen, M. D., in 1884, and the arrival of the ordained clergy missionaries Horace G. Underwood (a Presbyterian) and Henry G. Appenzeller (a Methodist) in 1885 from the United States of America. Though his visit was brief, this first Lutheran missionary declared in unshaken faith:

At all events, it [his visit] is the work of God, which I frequently commended in my prayers to his gracious care. Can the divine truth, disseminated in Korea, be lost? This I believe not. There will be some fruits in the appointed time of the Lord. (Gützlaff's "Journal of Three Voyages. . .", pp. 339f.)

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Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart (RGG), II, 1958, pp. 1905f.; *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission*, S. Neill, et. al., ed., 1971; German edition of the above Dictionary, *Lexikon zur Weltmission*; *Wycliffe Biographical Dictionary of the Church*, E. Moyer, 1982. A research paper by Walther Reiper [spelling?] in "Hankuk Ilbo," May 7, 1981, p. 7 (in Korean). All the above sources give an affirmative answer.

Concerning Gützlaff's contact with Korea in 1832, many authors on Korea take note of it in their writings but almost no one has mentioned that Gützlaff was a theologically trained Lutheran missionary.<sup>[3]</sup> The reason is apparently that his work did not continue in Korea; historians frequently mention his activity in Korea as only a "coastal visit." Another noteworthy point is that historians frequently fail to clarify that during the 1830s and subsequent decades Korea was still a tightly closed country, whereas in the time of Underwood and Appenzeller Korea was already open to the outside world and no longer hostile to Christianity. (Note the treaty between Korea and the United States in 1882.) Severe persecution, intermittent from 1785, started anew in 1801 and continued until 1881. Executed martyrs (Roman Catholics) were estimated at approximately 10,000. The first Protestant martyr, Rev. Robert J. Thomas of the London Missionary Society to China, lost his life in Pyongyang in 1866.

Not infrequently, the Lutherans make 'firsts,' but not necessarily end with 'firsts'. So it was the first Reformation in the sixteenth century with the name of the first Protestant denomination; so it was the Lutherans who were first in the United States even before the Pilgrims; so it was the Lutherans who had the first book, that is, Luther's Small Catechism, translated into an American Indian language; so then the first proclamation of the Gospel by a Protestant in Korea was made by

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[3] Many publications treat Gützlaff and Korea in one way or another. In Korean: *Korean Nationalistic Movement and the History of Christian Persecution*, Il Sup SHIM, 1982, pp. 49-53; *The Church History of Korea*, Kyung Bae MIN, 1972, pp. 112-116; *The History of the Korean Church*, Young Hun LEE, 1978, pp. 60-61. Published essays by the church historian, Doo Hwan SOHN. *Dae-Ha Sil-Rok, Yu-Myung 200 Nyun*, Vol. 2: "Endless Challenge" by Yi-Sup PARK, 1985, pp. 199-203. Both in English and in Korean: *The History of Protestant Missions in Korea, 1832-1910*, George L. G. PAIK, 1929; *History of the Korean Church*, Allen D. Clark, 1961.

a Lutheran. Have they since then all come out 'firsts'?

Karl F. A. Gützlaff<sup>[4]</sup> was born in Pyritz, Prussian Pomerania, on the Baltic Coast, of pietistic Lutheran parents. This was the place from which the renowned Johann Bugenhagen of the sixteenth century came. Gützlaff received his basic training at the Pädagogium in Halle and then at Jaenicke's Mission School in Berlin where he developed a strong desire to be a missionary. Here he came into contact not only with Moravianism (Herrnhuter) but also with Evangelicalism and Romanticism<sup>[5]</sup> while he was studying at the University of Berlin. His final training took place at the Netherland Missionary Society (NMS: *Nederlandisch Zendinggenootschap*) in Rotterdam, and he

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[4] *KOREA: Its Land, People and Culture of All Ages*, Hakwon-sa, Ltd., 1960, p. 340. *A History of Christian Missions*, Stephen Neill, 1964, 1979, pp. 285f. *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. 6: "The Great Century: North Africa and Asia," Kenneth Scott Latourette, 1980, pp. 300, 304-306, 419.

Also see: *A History of Christian Missions in China* by Kenneth S. Latourette, Macmillan Co., 1929, pp. 253-5. "Karl F. A. Gützlaff: Missionary Entrepreneur" by Jessie G. Lutz in the book *Christianity in China: Early Protestant Missionary Writings*, edited by S. W. Barnett and J. K. Fairbank, Harvard University, 1985, pp. 61-87. "Practical Evangelism: Protestant Missions and the Introduction of Western Civilization into China, 1820-1850," Suzanne W. Barnett, a Ph. D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1973. *Karl Gützlaff als Missionar in China*, Herman Schlyter, Lund, 1946, This book gives a thorough account on the life (pp. 8-32), as well as the work, of Gützlaff. Also see Schlyter's more recent work: *Der China-Missionar Karl Gützlaff und seine Heimatbasis*, 1976.

[5] Moravians were active in missionary work, holding the conviction that their colonies should be as leaven. Their settlement, founded on the slope of Mount Hut, was called Herrnhut. An association was formed on the basis of common religious ground; order and discipline were established. In Lutheran countries, Moravian doctrines were influenced by Lutheran Confessions; in England and America, Reformed influence prevailed.

worked for some time with the Society. At that time many German missionaries served under the NMS. On a visit to London he met the Chinese missionary and scholar Robert Morrison (1782-1834). Gützlaff's first missionary field was in Indonesia, where he met missionaries working among diaspora Chinese. He learned Chinese well and started to work among them. He took a Chinese name and wore Chinese clothes. Later he was known as the "apostle of China" or "apostle of the Chinese." However, his mission society did not approve of his "superficial" style of doing things. Gützlaff was a noticeably independent-minded person. He was "a missionary entrepreneur par excellence—flamboyant, talented, and indefatigable. . . with seemingly boundless energy, [he] plunged into a regimen that included the study of six languages, additional courses at the University of Berlin, and a prodigious quantity of extracurricular reading" (Lutz, pp. 61, 64). Frequently he was known as "ein typischer Vertreter der Einmannsmission (a typical example of one-man mission society)

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As the term indicates, the "evangelicals" try to be loyal to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Later the term described those who emphasized the doctrine of atonement for sin. Evangelicals are known for mission work, personal piety, and opposition to ritualism and modernism. Both "Moravians and Evangelicals" have strong pietistic inclination.

Romanticism, on the other hand, is a movement in literature, art, religion and theology in the last half of the 18th and first part of the 19th century. It developed against the background of classicism, humanism, and the Enlightenment. Romanticism is also characterized by subjectivity, mystery, appeal to imagination and fancy, emphasis on beauty of the natural world, desire of freedom for each personality, idealizing pantheism or its counterpart as an explanation of the relation between the inner and outer world.

For John Jaenicke, pastor of a Lutheran church in Berlin, his Mission School in Berlin, his connection with the Moravians, and his students Karl Rhenius and Karl Gützlaff, etc., see Drach, *op. cit.*, pp. 18ff.

und Hudson Taylors Vorbild." [Schlyter, *Karl Gützlaff als Missionar in China*, p. 7]. Certainly he opened the way for "free mission," "free missionary," "faith mission," etc., for the generations that followed. His idiosyncrasy was precisely his strength as well as his weakness, which can be a valid reason for more serious attention to him in our time, rather than lightly writing off his thoughts and methodology of missions. In 1828 he became a free-lance missionary. He worked in Siam (Thailand), translating the Bible and other Christian materials into Siamese. During 1831-33 he made three journeys along the coast of China, and made it known in Europe and the United States that China was not open for commerce but was open for the Gospel. During his second trip in 1832 he visited a number of places on the west coast of Korea.<sup>[6]</sup> The following quotation may shed additional

[6] Karl Gützlaff, "Journal of Three Voyages along the Coast of China, in 1831, 1832 and 1833, with Notices of Siam, Korea, and the Loo-Choo Islands," London, Frederick Westley & Danis, 1834. This is the most authoritative primary source on the subject. Gützlaff's diary on Korea includes the period from July 17 to August 17, 1832. There is another valuable report by Gützlaff's fellow traveller to the west coast of the Korean peninsula, Mr. H. H. Lindsay, under the title: "Report of Proceedings on a Voyage to the Northern Ports of China, in the ship LORD AMHERST." London: B. Fellowes, Ludgate Street. 1933. Lindsay's report in this publication gives a detailed account of their experiences in Korea and with Koreans. In his report, Gützlaff's words, drafted for the visit of the ship Lord Amherst and addressed to the king of Korea, are cited ("A Memorial for the Inspection of the King"). In that document we read: ". . . We [Gützlaff's party] have moreover given you [the king] books containing the doctrines of our religion, and the true revelations of God and Jesus; these, if carefully read by well disposed persons, contain precepts which may be of the greatest utility. Confucius says, 'Within the four seas all mankind are brethren.' You honor these principles; yet if you acted on them, how can you prohibit intercourse with foreigners?" (pp. 254ff.) The above two rare documents are found in the libraries of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and a few universities in the United States.



light on Gützlaff's visit, taken from William E. Griffis' informative book *Corea, The Hermit Nation* (1882, 1902, pp. 359f):

In this year [1832] also the British ship, Lord Amherst, was sent out by the East India Company on a voyage of commercial exploration, and to open, if possible, new markets for the fabrics of England and India. On board was a Prussian gentleman, the Rev. Charles Gützlaff, under the patronage of the Netherlands Missionary Society, though travelling at his own cost. Reaching the coast of Chulla [South Korea], July 17th, he remained one month. Being a good Chinese scholar, and well equipped with medical knowledge, he landed on several of the islands and on the mainland, he distributed presents of books, buttons, and medicines, planted potatoes and taught their cultivation. Through an officer he sent the king presents of cut glass, calicoes, and woollen goods, with a copy of the Bible and some Protestant Christian tracts. These, after some days of negotiations, were refused. A few of the more intelligent natives risked their heads and accepted various gifts, among which were Chinese translations of European works on geography and mathematics. Mr. Gützlaff could discover no trace of Christianity or the converts, though he made diligent inquiry. The lying magistrates denied all knowledge of even the existence of the Christian faith. . . . [he was] fully impressed with their need of soap and Bibles.

At the time of Gützlaff's visit, Korea was a forbidden land, not open to the outside world, and generally hostile to the "Western Teaching" (Christianity), which was prohibited. The Korean people, both the local rulers and commoners, were naturally suspicious of Gützlaff. The Koreans whom Gützlaff and his company met repeatedly drew their forefingers across their throats to emphasize the great risk that the presence of foreigners meant to them all. Notwithstanding, he distributed Bibles, Christian tracts and other books, helped to plant potatoes [maybe the local product in Korea], and very cautiously preached to the people on a personal basis. Most people with whom Gützlaff made contact were poor fishermen and ordinary country people. At the

end of Gützlaff's visit, these simple folks, islanders and the rank and file officials of local government were sorry to the point of tears to see him leave. Is it possible that during his brief encounter with the people Gützlaff was able to convey a more evangelical spirit of **a-so-kyo** (=Protestantism), in contrast to the more authoritarian and formalistic approach of Roman Catholicism(**chun-ju-kyo**)?<sup>[7]</sup> In any case, we can sense Gützlaff's love of the gospel and of the Korean people whom he met during his visit. He wrote in his diary:

In the great plan of the eternal God, there will be a time of merciful visitation for them [Korean people]. While we look for this, we ought to be very anxious to hasten its approach, by diffusing the glorious doctrines of the cross by all means and power. . . The Scripture teaches us to believe that God can bless even these feeble beginnings. Let us hope that better days will soon dawn for Korea. (Gützlaff, "Journal of Three Voyages. . .," p.355).

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- [7] Kil-Jun YU Series on *Su-yu Kyun-Mun* (in Korean), 1971, vol. 1, pp. 366-367. See William Elliot Griffis, *Corea, The Hermit Nation*, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882, 1902, p. 360: In the early 19th century, "the moral weakness of Roman Catholic methods of evangelization in Corea, and elsewhere in Asia, has been revealed. It must be remembered that the Corean converts were taught to believe not only in the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope, but also in the righteousness of his claim to temporal power as the Vicar of Heaven. Untaught in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and doubtless ignorant of the words of Jesus. . ."

"Much as Gützlaff admired and imitated the early Jesuit missionaries, his praise was always tempered with criticism. It was unfortunate, in Gützlaff's mind, that such courageous, dedicated, and intelligent missionaries as Ricci, Verbiest, and Schall worked in the cause of Popery. They refused to give the Gospel to the masses. The science they brought was so enmeshed in Romanism that both Western secular knowledge and true Christianity acquired an unhappy reputation in China." (cf. Lutz, *op. cit.*, 86)

Gützlaff's account of these three journeys aroused great interest in the West as to the possibilities of missionary work in China. How much interest in Korea was also aroused is a difficult question to answer. At any rate, no Germans or Dutch volunteered for missionary work in Korea in response to Gützlaff's urging, as far as we can determine. Some fifty-two years later American Presbyterians and Methodists began sending mission workers to Korea. Exactly 126 years after Gützlaff's visit to Korea, American Lutherans (The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) started missionary work in Korea in the name of "Lutheran."

This man of talent, vision, and high aspiration, Karl Gützlaff, left many traces of his work as interpreter, translator, negotiator, secretary, superintendent of trade, surgeon and missionary. After the Peace of Nanking (August, 1842), he lived in Hong Kong and devoted himself to training Chinese workers and sending them out as evangelists and tract distributors. His ambitious goal was to evangelize China within one generation. With this in mind he established a Chinese Christian Society of religious teachers in 1847. To find more money and missionaries, Gützlaff went to Europe in 1849, his only home visit. After his return to China in 1851 he died at Victoria, Hong Kong. The Chinese Christian Society was dissolved and his work taken over by other organizations such as the Basel and Berlin mission societies. Gützlaff, in the meantime, has become known as the "grandfather" of the China Inland Mission (CIM). Through him David Livingstone (1813-73) and James Hudson Taylor (1832-1905; founded China Inland Mission in 1865) received their missionary calls.<sup>[8]</sup>

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[8] An extensive work on Gützlaff is *Karl Gützlaff als Missionar in China* (with a brief English Summary), an Inaugural Dissertation by Herman Schlyter, Lund, Sweden, 1946. Schlyter has written a second part of his study on Gützlaff in *Studia Missionalia Upsaliensis*, . . . : *Der China-*

As we look in retrospect at this story of some one-hundred fifty years ago, we may speculate with some sense of regret by asking: What might have happened had Gützlaff determined to stay in Korea and continue his missionary work on the Korean peninsula despite strong opposition and even persecution in the land at that time? Or, if the Lutherans in Europe, particularly in Germany and Scandinavia, had responded to Gützlaff by engaging more actively in the Christian missionary tasks in China and Korea, what might have been the result? All kinds of possible scenarios can be imagined. At any rate, it is a challenging lesson of history for all Lutherans who are frequently abundant in talk but slow in action for God's mission to the world.<sup>[9]</sup>

In commemoration of Gützlaff's historical visit and stay in

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*Missionar Karl Gützlaff und seine Heimatbasis*, 1976, pp. 262. This second book shows on the one hand the considerable effect Gützlaff had on Europe, and on the other hand some deficiencies and superficialities both in his theology and mission method. Gützlaff was definitely a pioneer but not a founder or builder of something solid in mission work. Some helpful comments are made on Gützlaff in *Die christliche Mission: Geschichte und Theologie*, Gerhard Rosenkranz, Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1977, pp. 198-201: "David Livingstone (1813-1873) wurde durch Gützlaffs Berichte für die Chinamission gewonnen, aber durch den Opiumkrieg an ihrer Aufnahme verhindert. Er ging nach Afrika und wirkte dort... Gützlaffs Arbeit in China neu durch Hudson Taylor (1832-1905), der durch die von Gützlaff in London gegründete Chinesische Evangelisation-Gesellschaft für sie begeistert wurde. . . Taylor nannte Gützlaff dankbar den 'Grossvater der China-Inland-Mission.' Darin zeigte sich die Stetigkeit, in der seine Glaubensmission mit der Arbeit seines Vorgängers verbunden war. . ."

- [9] This portion of the chapter on Gützlaff was published in the November issue (pp. 201-3) of *Concordia Journal*, 1985, in almost identical form. However, many more references are added here. For gathering more materials related to Gützlaff, after the appearance of the article in the above journal, my former student, Mr. Robert Roethemeyer, gave me much help while he was working as a part-time staff member of Concordia Seminary Library.

Korea, a meaningful stone monument was built in 1982 at Wonsan island off the shore at Tae-Chun on the west coast of South Korea. Together with some faculty members and students of Luther Seminary, the present writer visited this historical site on May 18, 1987. On the monument, these words are written in Korean, German and English:

In memory of the German Missionary Karl Gützlaff, M. D. [sic] born in 1803 in Pyritz/Pomerania and died in 1851 in Hong Kong. He arrived at this place on July 17, 1832 where he distributed Bible tracts and the Lord's Prayer. He wrote in his book the words of confidence: "Let us hope that better days will soon dawn for Korea."<sup>[10]</sup>

17th July 1982

150th Anniversary

National Council of Churches in Korea (KNCC)

Korea Christian Medical-Evangelical Association (KCMEA)

German Embassy in Korea

Netherlands Embassy in Korea

Song Juk Educational Foundation

Community Development Committee

## 2. Korean Contacts in Modern Time

It is very difficult to trace all Lutheran contacts with Korea and all Korean contacts with Lutheranism since the visit of Karl Gützlaff in 1832. There might have been some instances of Lutheran

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[10] The accuracy of this description is somewhat questionable. Gützlaff was primarily a theologically trained missionary. His medical knowledge was more or less self-acquired; he was not professionally trained. No known record shows that Gützlaff stopped at Wonsan-do on that date. He stopped at Changsun-do, Kodae-do and other islands as well as some points on the mainland. The Committee for establishing the monument might have been misinformed due to inaccurate information.

Christians contacting Korea as individuals, traders or diplomats. However, there is no clear written evidence of this as far as we can determine. On the other hand, there could have been instances of Korean students studying outside of Korea, perhaps in China and Japan, who might have taken courses at Lutheran theological institutions and returned to their church bodies at home in Korea and continued their work.<sup>[11]</sup>

Since the first organized Lutheran mission work in Korea was started in 1958 by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), we have taken the liberty of tracing the history from this point. Behind this work, there was a Korean who seemed to be instrumental in encouraging the LCMS to begin work in Korea. In a mission report to the Houston Convention in 1953, it was stated:

During the Rev. [Herman H.] Koppelman's visit to our Foreign Mission fields in 1951-52 he also had a chance to see Korea, which may, by and by, become a mission field for us. Several Korean students are at present in the U. S. A., with the thought of future activity for the Lutheran in Korea. One of these, Mr. Ji [Won Yong], has translated the [Luther's Small] Catechism into the Korean language. For this he is particularly subsidized by Jehovah

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[11] For another kind of Lutheran contact with Korea, the following story is of interest. During World War II a prominent Christian leader, Dr. Chitose Kishi, at one time president of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church and of Japan Lutheran Theological Seminary in Tokyo, was imprisoned for being suspected of assisting the Korean Independence Movement among Koreans living in Japan.

About the same time Dr. Kosaku Nao, Kishi's brother-in-law and former president of the Japan Lutheran Church (NRK) and an Old Testament scholar, visited Korea at the invitation of the Christian churches in Korea where he also spoke at Chaeryung, my former hometown in Korea, in order to alleviate some of the pressure of the Japanese government upon Korean churches. Later both men became lifelong friends of the present writer.

# Lutheran Congregation in St. Paul.<sup>[12]</sup>

At the same Houston Convention in 1953 the LCMS resolved:

*... Whereas, the Lord has directed several students into our midst who are preparing at our institutions for possible future work as missionaries in Korea, if the Lord should make it possible for them to return to that country; and. . .*

RESOLVED, That permission be granted to the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries to begin mission work in Korea when the time and opportunity for that undertaking are at hand.<sup>[13]</sup>

One of those Korean students was myself. I had been a student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis since September 1950. I was preparing for the holy ministry, hoping to serve in Korea some day. A few other Korean students were studying at St. John's College in Winfield, Kansas, and at Concordia Seminary during the late 1950s and early '60s. (cf. footnote 13) Ever since then, my involvement with the Lutheran work has been a part of the history of Lutheranism in Korea. For this reason, I would like to describe what happened prior to 1958, the first year of Missouri Synod's work in Korea, as far as my life and involvement with Lutheranism were concerned. A part of this story was written upon request on April 23, 1960, and sent to Rev. Ernest R. Drews and later on Feb. 9, 1961, also sent to Rev. Donald E. Heck, under the title "HOW I BECAME A LUTHERAN."

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[12] Convention Proceedings, 1953, p. 451.

[13] Houston Convention, 1953, pp. 454 and 455: Memorial 412 and Resolution 21). In addition to Won Yong Ji, there were Wi Jo KANG (SL 60), Shang Ik MOON (SL 63), and Christopher Y. CHWEH (SL 63) who came to the USA for study. KANG, MOON and CHWEH successfully completed their education including advanced degrees and have pursued teaching careers in the United States.



### 3. My Personal Contacts with Lutheranism

#### Luther and I

To take up the subject of my initial contact with the Lutheran Church (hereafter, Lutheranism), I have to say something about "Luther and I." Indeed, this has an indirect connection with my later involvement with the Lutheran Church and my entire life career with Lutheranism.

One spring afternoon, when I was 16 years old (1940), I stopped by chance at the "Jesus-Teaching Book Store" in the town of Chaeryung, Hwang-Hae Province, Korea, where my family lived at that time. Looking around the bookshelves and browsing through individual books with no specific thought in mind, I came across a book in Korean entitled "*The Great Work of Luther*" (Later, I found out that it was a translated copy of John L. Nuelsen, *Luther: The Leader*, 1906). With much interest I read several pages of the book while standing in the book store. I decided to buy it. With unusual fascination I read through the book in a short time, and re-read it later. I also told my parents and friends about what I had read. I felt I had met a superman, an impossible man for ordinary mortals. With singular conviction of faith and pen, he challenged the mighty Papacy to whose power none—even the Emperors and Kings of the day—could stand contrary. Often I contemplated: Korea needs such men of courage and conviction. What was the source of Luther's conviction, I asked myself. At that time I could not grasp the real meaning of his message and why he was so angry. What fascinated me most was his courage and persistence for his cause. I wished I could be even one-hundredth of what he had been. This was my first real encounter with Luther, even though I had previously read about him briefly in a book, *History of the West*.

After that striking incident, I did not give any more thought to



Luther. Eight years passed. And then I found myself meeting Lutheranism again as I stood for the first time in front of the sign-board of Trinity Lutheran Church in Olympia, Washington, on April 10, 8:00 p.m., 1948.

### The Lutheran Church and I

To talk about this subject I have to start first with my study abroad, namely, going from Korea to America in order to study. Because I was a displaced person in South Korea from the Communist occupied North Korea, my life as a student was an extremely difficult one financially. No monetary means were available for me to go abroad. As mentioned earlier, I was born in a small mountainous village, not far from the Korean-Manchurian Border. When I was 13 years of age, my family moved to the town of Chaeryung, about 80 miles south but still in the northern part of Korea.

Following WW II many young people of my age dreamed about studying abroad, particularly in the United States of America. But very few could see such a dream actualized. At that time, the U.S. Armed Forces were governing South Korea with a Military Government.

Upon graduation from a Presbyterian college in Seoul (now, Hanshin University) in 1947, I had the honor of receiving a scholarship from the US 5th Air Force Unit stationed at Kimpo Air Base near Seoul (C.I., No. 00591, US Visa 4-E #106). The legal guarantor for my coming to America for study was Chaplain (Capt.) Hal H. Martin, a clergyman of the Church of Christ in America. While I was on the high seas on a huge steamship (March 27-April 10, 1948), the US SS General Haan, for 16 days, Corporal Wilbur Cain sent a cablegram to his parents in Olympia, Washington, asking them to meet me at the port of Seattle upon arrival on April 10. Corp. Cain was an assistant to Chaplain Martin.

He was a Missouri Synod Lutheran, as was his mother.

After the long voyage with terrible sea-sickness and all sorts of anxiety and worry about the unknown land and people with a totally different language, I was extremely tired. At such a time, it was unbelievably good news for me to hear from the ship's chaplain that some folks were waiting for me at the harbor where we were to disembark. Lo and behold, Mr. and Mrs. T. Cain were indeed waiting for me outside. Their hospitality for five days at their home, the beautiful harbor and city of Seattle, the scenery along the road from Seattle to Olympia, were all my first good impressions of America. I was encouraged. I was seeing a light of hope.

That same evening, Mrs. Doris Cain took me to her church and introduced me to the Rev. and Mrs. Ernest R. Drews. This was a historical moment in my life. For the first time I saw the sign **Lutheran Church**, and met the person who was to become my personal counselor, legal sponsor, life-long friend and colleague. (Pastor Drews moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, in Nov. 1950 and died on Feb. 19, 1970). It was exactly eight years since my early encounter with Luther, the hero of my youth. That past memory returned to my mind. I had a feeling of meeting an old friend, even though the **Lutheran Church** was somewhat strange to me. The short period of orientation with the Cain family, the Drews, and Trinity Lutheran congregation in Olympia gave me many positive impressions and a valuable feeling of encouragement. Furthermore, Mrs. Doris Cain, who was an unusually fast talker, gave me a tough but valuable drill in the American language.

For the next two years I attended San Jose Bible College in San Jose, California (selected by Chaplain Hal Martin, B. Th. in '50), and San Jose State College at my own choice. During that time I had chances to visit Olympia, and I exchanged letters with those Lutheran and other precious friends whom I had met during those first days in America. But I did not change my church affiliation.

My parents, under Confucian influence for generations in the past, had received the Christian faith through a Presbyterian village church. I was later baptized at the age of 17 in Chaeryung. My admiration for Luther and association with Lutheran friends in Olympia, Washington, did not yet make me change and become a Lutheran. Nor did any of my Lutheran friends in Olympia press me into becoming a Lutheran. I appreciated this more than anything else. On this matter Pastor Drews was very wise and tactful.<sup>[14]</sup>

While staying in San Jose, I received some Lutheran literature, such as the "Lutheran Witness," and learned about The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. I again read about Luther in my spare time: his *Small and Large Catechisms*, *The Freedom of the Christian Man*, Plass' biography of Luther, and occasional reading of the *Concordia Theological Monthly*. In San Jose I attended worship services of the Church of Christ, the Presbyterian Church, and the Lutheran Church with considerable curiosity.

Toward the end of my college work in California, I looked for a graduate school somewhere in the States. Among other schools I had also received a catalogue of Concordia Seminary in January 1950. Through Rev. Drews I had already heard about this Lutheran seminary in St. Louis.<sup>[15]</sup> Soon thereafter I submitted an application to Concordia Seminary. One day early in April, 1950, I received a letter of admission with a warm friendly covering letter from Dean L. C. Wuerffel and another letter from the Foreign Student Committee of the LCMS (Dr. Lawrence B. Meyer). I felt I was truly welcomed by the seminary and the Lutheran Church.

A new chapter in my life was ready to unfold. Plans for going to Concordia Seminary were all made. In the meantime, Rev.

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[14] Cf. Pastor Drews' letter to Won Yong Ji, dated Jan. 14, 1950.

[15] *Ibid.*

Drews took legal sponsorship for me. In a way I was sorry that I could not comply with Chaplain Martin's wish for me to work with his church's mission in Korea. At any rate, I am very grateful for men like Chaplain Martin and Chaplain Thoburn Speicher (a Methodist), Martin's predecessor at Kimpo Air Base who befriended me when I was in Korea.

As I anxiously looked forward to studying at Concordia Seminary, some tragic news came from Korea — the outbreak of the "Korean War" early in the morning of June 25. At the time I was in Olympia, Washington, engaged in a dish-washing job at a restaurant in the city. My heart was greatly troubled. The war was getting worse and spreading wider and wider. "For whom and for what am I studying? What is my future? What is the future of Korea and my people?" Many perplexing thoughts began to disturb me. I became increasingly anxious. One day in July, I vividly remember, a letter came from the U.S. Department of Defense addressed to all Korean students in America who had completed at least two years of college level education. It asked us to volunteer for service as a translator or interpreter in the headquarters of the U.S. (and UN) Armed Forces in Korea. The compensation would be exactly the same as a first lieutenant of the U.S. Army in all respects, to be brought back to America for continuation of study after two years of service, and to have the privilege of naturalization as an American citizen if one wished. What attracted me most was the chance for participation in the suffering of my country and to somehow help the people of Korea in this extraordinary crisis. I thought very seriously. Naturally I consulted Rev. Drews, my closest friend at the time. After much reflection on his part as well as mine, he said "No." I decided not to take the invitation and proceeded with the plan of going to St. Louis. I thought there might be something else for me in God's plan. As it turned out, the prolonged war in Korea and the stalemate at the end in July 1953 did lead me to alter my plans in

the subsequent years. I decided to pursue advanced degrees in theology, even up to doctoral work. At the same time, I was hoping for the right time to return to Korea with an assignment from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

On September 9, 1950, I arrived in St. Louis after a long journey of three days and nights by Greyhound Bus from Olympia, Washington. I was impressed by the beautiful campus of Concordia Seminary and the statue of Dr. Martin Luther standing at its entrance. From then on the seminary campus was my home base for seven years. Even while I was at Valparaiso University for study and the University of Heidelberg in Germany, Concordia was my reference point. The administrators and professors of the seminary were kind and helpful in my pursuit of education in the land of opportunity and freedom, America.

Upon arrival in St. Louis, I had definitely decided to become a Lutheran. I took a regular adult instruction class under Rev. Edward H. Schroeder, then the pastor of Concordia Lutheran Church in Maplewood, Missouri. I joined the congregation on March 18, 1951, as a communicant member.<sup>[16]</sup> Since then, Pastor Schroeder has contributed much to my life and work in Korea and elsewhere. He is now retired in Long Beach, California. Along my pilgrimage to Lutheranism and my life-long ministry within the Lutheran Church, there have been many unforgettable people who made significant contributions to my life, including, besides the names already mentioned, the members of Jehovah Ev. Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1957-58; Trinity Lutheran Church in Olympia, Washington, 1948-50; Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wolff in St. Louis; and Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Haemker, Crete,

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[16] In the bulletin of Concordia Lutheran Church, Maplewood, Missouri, dated March 25, 1951, it was noted: "OFFICIAL ACT: CONFIRMATION: Mr. Won Yong Ji was confirmed with the group on last Sunday morning. We welcome you into membership with our Lutheran Church, Mr. Ji."

Illinois. There are too many to mention them all.

As early as October, 1950, I had opportunity to meet some of the leaders of the LCMS, namely, Dr. O. H. Schmidt, then the Executive Secretary of the Board for Foreign Missions, his assistant, Rev. Herman H. Koppelman, and Dr. Lawrence B. Meyer, then the Planning Counselor for the LCMS. At our first meeting Dr. Meyer asked me whether or not I was interested in working with the Lutheran Church, possibly in Korea, whenever a good time arrived. My response was positive. I especially liked his direct gentlemanly person-to-person manner. He also thoughtfully encouraged me to keep up a high quality of academic work at Concordia Seminary. In later years he and Mrs. Meyer invited me to their home for dinner and fellowship. They were exceptionally kind people, I thought.

An episode: During the Easter break in 1951, a dinner invitation came to me over the telephone from Mrs. Ma-i-ur. I took for granted that it was from Mrs. Walter A. Maier, who lived within walking distance of our campus. I went to her house at the designated time. The door was locked. In disappointment and puzzlement I returned to the seminary dining hall for eating, which had almost ended. A telephone message came again as I was about to sit at the dining table. The same lady was on the line. It was Mrs. Meyer. The dinner was 40 minutes delayed because of my confusion. I should have learned better the Germanic names !

My relationships with Dr. Schmidt and Dr. Koppelman likewise continued for many years, but our association was more official than personal in nature. They were cordial but more businesslike. They dealt with me as efficient mission executives, with a more or less "let's wait and see" attitude in regard to my relationship with the Mission Board. At any rate, my study at Concordia Seminary and elsewhere, and my anxious preoccupation with Korea during and after the War, left me little time to think about anything else.

Before long I discovered how much effort my friend, Rev. Ernest Drews, had put behind my cause. Through him I was already known to many people, even before my actual coming to St. Louis. Naturally Pastor Drews also had in mind the possibility of opening Lutheran work in Korea someday and my possible involvement in it.

During the war years in Korea, I put out a small mimeographed publication, "Korean Outlook" (1951-53). I also jointly engaged in publishing another small paper, "Korean Messenger," with some Korean journalism students, like Kyung-Won LEE at the University of Illinois, as a token contribution to my homeland of Korea and for the promotion of understanding between the Korean and American peoples. From 1950 I was also in close contact with many members of LCMS. During those three war years (1950-53), I went out more than 120 times to speak to various church related groups and business organizations on Korea and its religions, Christianity and mission. The interest of American people about Korea at that time was immense. If nothing else, my presence at Concordia Seminary served as a reminder to think seriously about initiating mission work in Korea as soon as the war would come to an end. Two things should also be mentioned during the early part of the 1950s: namely, my translation of *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (the "Blue Catechism") into Korean in the summer of 1952, with the encouragement of Rev. Drews and the assistance of Jehovah Ev. Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minnesota.<sup>[17]</sup> Secondly, my B. D. Thesis on "A Mission Approach of the Lutheran Church to Korea"

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[17] Cf. Korean Edition of *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, Concordia Press, Seoul, 1960, p. 3.

The "St. Paul Dispatch," 1952. 8: "Catechism gets Korean Words."

The Valparaiso University TORCH, Sept. 18, 1952, page 4: "A Campus Korean Translates Catechism for Countrymen," reported by Laurel Tamm.

[1952, pp. 70 ]<sup>[18]</sup> which reveals what I thought about eventual Lutheran work in Korea.

In a personal communication to a friend I wrote in April, 1960, from Korea:

When I was still at Concordia Seminary in America, I used to think: How wonderful would it be to bring Christ to my country people with the help of the Lutherans where there had never been any work done by the Lutherans ! Thanks be to God, then a dream, now a reality. Here I am in my homeland Korea, together with four helpful missionary colleagues today.

#### **4 . The “Korean War” and the Lutherans**

##### **The “Tough Little War”**

Lord, I tried to forget for so long, but I can still see the blood on the snow, the dead and the wounded. I hear the crying and praying of the dying. Feel the cold still in my bones, and the desperate desire to get out of there alive and well.

This quote is from a soldier’s newsletter reported in a newspaper in America. He was in the Jang-Jin (wrongly reported then as “Chosin,” Japanese reading of Jang-Jin) Reservoir battle in the far north of Korea during the “toughest little war ever fought,” the Korean War of 1950-53.

At 4 a. m. on June 25, 1950, troops from communist-ruled North Korea crossed the 38th parallel and attacked the ill-prepared South with heavy artillery, tank units, and an invasion force of more than 90,000 troops. At the end of World War II in 1945, Korea, which had been under Japanese rule for some 36 years, was occupied in the south by U. S. forces and in the north by Russian troops. This most unfortunate division of the peninsula came about

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[18] Concordia Seminary Library, BV 4070, C 69, B3, 1952, v. 10



as a political settlement between Russia, Britain and the United States, against the wishes of the Korean people. Soon after the North Korean invasion, American troops were fighting alongside South Koreans as part of a U. N. "police action." By Christmas 1950, Chinese forces entered on the side of North Korea, and the United States found itself fighting its former ally from World War II.

On July 27, 1953, negotiators at Panmunjom signed the Korean War armistice that ended three years of brutal fighting. Almost as many American lives were lost — 63,219 — as during the ten years of the Vietnam War. Korea's grim statistics, as kept by the U. S. Department of Defense, indicate 31,227 Americans killed in action; 2,415 died in captivity; 21,400 died in the service outside of battle; 8,177, almost four times as many as in Vietnam, still considered missing in action. At the widely publicized Jang-Jin Reservoir Battle alone, where the U. N. Forces were met by a mass attack of some 120,000 Chinese communist troops, the U. N. losses were about 3,000 dead, 5,000 wounded and 15,000 with frostbite. This is only one part of the great tragedy. Millions of Korean civilians died, were wounded, left homeless, were separated from their families, or became refugees. Literally the whole population in the South and North was affected by the war, not to mention the inestimable material loss.

Today, some 35 years after the so-called armistice agreement, the peninsula is still divided. Endless 'talks' are still going on at Panmunjom. The animosity and suspicion between the two parties is still strong. In fact, in 1953 many were doubtful about the real value of the armistice. The president of South Korea at that time strongly disagreed with it. Less than two weeks after the armistice, President Syngman Rhee said: ". . . This agreement is not to lessen war but a preparatory act of another bigger war. . . an introduction of further savage act of communists. . . " (Aug. 10, 1953). The Commander of the UN Forces, General M. Clark,

commented after he had just signed the document on the July 27 afternoon: "Instead of feeling happy, I think of this cease-fire agreement to be a time of praying for a small benefit to mankind. . . this an undecided victory. . ." Then the President of the U. S., Dwight D. Eisenhower declared: "... we won merely a cease-fire of fighting, not a peace of the world. . ." (Quotations from Korean publications, translated.)

The Korean War was never a popular war like World War II. The relationships among the Allied Nations were a tangled mess; the war's goals were never clear. With U. S. Forces at least theoretically under the powerless United Nations, the war somehow never seemed to be America's war.

But the Korean War had made the American people, as well as the people of the world, aware of the existence of Korea.

### Lutheran Servicemen

The war in Korea — a land where one-fourth of the population already consisted of refugees who had fled from communist-occupied North Korea between 1945 and 1950 — not only created an unprecedented tragedy, it also brought international attention to the peninsula. In the United States, many young men and women were called to serve in the Armed Forces during the Korean War. Consequently military chaplains were also needed. The Armed Services Commission for the LCMS was calling young pastors under 33 years of age to volunteer for the chaplaincy in the Army, Navy or Air Force.<sup>[19]</sup> As military preparations mounted and the Armed Forces increased, the quota of chaplains from the Lutheran church bodies also rose. Many of the chaplains who had served in WW II returned to parishes but retained their status in the reserves; they were now subject to recall. Many responded to the

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[19] *Lutheran Witness*, Sept. 19, 1950, p. 303.

urgent call for service in the Armed Forces.<sup>[20]</sup> Later statistics reveal that during 1950-1953 alone 70 Lutheran chaplains served in Korea (27 from LCA, 9 from ALC, 34 from LCMS).<sup>[21]</sup> Many of these dedicated men rendered service to their country and to the needy people during the war of over three years. They wrote to their loved ones at home telling about the sad situation in Korea. The following was reported in the *Lutheran Witness* (Feb. 6, 1951, p. 44):

At the present time [21 Nov. 1950] I am in Korea, in the northern part, in Kapsan, north of the 41 parallel and about 20 miles from Manchuria. I have noticed evidences of Christianity here in Korea. Other denominations, particularly the Catholics and Presbyterians, have made the beginning. What Korea needs more than anything else is Christianity! The Christians that are here seem to be solid. When the Communists threatened to kill them if they remained Christians, any number chose to remain Christians. Over in Iwon, halfway between the 40 and 41 parallel, on the northeastern coast of Korea, over 200 Christians were murdered by the Communists. Many of the ministers, priests, and nuns were taken away captive by the Communists. It takes real courage to be and remain a Christian in Korea! I am not aware that there are any Lutherans here. I talked with some Presbyterians. . .

There is no exaggeration in the above observation of a Lutheran soldier. Some of my friends, acquaintances and former teachers, like Dr. Chang-Kun SONG and Rev. Young-Joo KIM, were victimized under the brutal advance of the communists in the early part of the war. "With a field altar set up on a jeep radiator, Chaplain Gerhardt W. Hyatt held two or three services a day for men of the 24th Division in Korea. . ." "I would speak two or three sentences in English," wrote chaplain John Grapatin, "and the

[20] *Lutheran Witness*, Oct. 17, 1950, p. 328.

[21] On the basis of a list provided by Magnus P. Lutness, DSMP/LC-USA, 6-26-1984 and *The Lutheran Witness*, April 28, 1953, p. 140.

Christian interpreter would repeat these to the ROK's [Korean soldiers] in the audience. He became quite emphatic, stressing the fact that Jesus is the hope of the world."<sup>[22]</sup>

Along with the chaplains, there were thousands of Lutheran servicemen who fought in the Korean War and gave helping hands to the needy. Even now among my immediate colleagues in St. Louis, there are two men who served in Korea during and prior to the war, Profs. Harley L. Kopitske and Louis A. Brighton. Then Sgt. Kopitske of the U. S. Marine Corps, now a professor of Concordia Seminary, recalling the year in the battlefield wrote:

The dead who were not ready to die and the orphaned with no one to love them are the greatest tragedies of war. Holding the children at Masan orphanages on our lap, easing their loneliness and fear and telling them of Jesus provided a number of Christian Marines with the greatest thrill of their young lives — mine included. (St. Louis: August 18, 1986)

A church magazine reported: "Shocked by the tragedy that has overtaken the Korean people, particularly the children, our servicemen are doing what they can to help them physically and spiritually."<sup>[23]</sup> According to a report dated Oct. 1, 1952, from the State of Illinois alone, 35 Missouri Synod servicemen had lost their lives since the beginning of the Korean action.<sup>[24]</sup>

The Lutheran servicemen and chaplains were a strong mission impetus for the Lutheran folks in America. They urged the Lutheran Christians at home to do something for Korea.<sup>[25]</sup> Indeed, they brought Korea to LCMS attention.

The role of these Lutheran servicemen in Korea during and after the Korean War has also been meaningful for the Korea

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[22] *The Lutheran Witness*, May 1, 1951, p. 152.

[23] *The Lutheran Witness*, Jan. 22, 1952, p. 5.

[24] Op. cit., Nov. 11, 1952, p. 5.

[25] Cf. *The Lutheran Witness*, April 28, 1953, p. 13; Jan. 18, 1955, "Letters."

Lutheran Mission (KLM). Some outstanding names are Chaplains Martin Kretzschmar, John F. Gaertner, Arthur B. Loessner, Arthur W. Meyer, Werner R. Saar, William J. Reiss, Theodore V. Koepke, Major Leonard J. Chase, to mention several. These gentlemen were cooperative and helpful, in some cases prior to the entry of the Lutherans and in other cases with KLM during its early years.

In the wake of the severely fought war the number of refugees and homeless people was staggering. Along with other such agencies Church World Service in Korea (KCWS) built up a large relief operation in Korea. Innumerable Lutheran Christians in the U. S. actively participated in it, though there was no Lutheran church body in operation in Korea at that time. Lutheran funds and relief materials were sent to Korea through Lutheran World Relief and then administered through KCWS. The overall program of KCWS in the early years consisted of helping refugees, assisting children in orphanages, maintaining tuberculosis treatment programs and clinics, providing clothing and medicines to poor people, land reclamation projects like the one at Dai Duk on the south coast, and many other projects of relief and assistance. Particularly in connection with KLM and the KCWS, we remember with gratitude the work and cooperation of fellow Lutherans like Rev. James P. Claypool and Mr. Abner B. Batalden who were representatives of Lutheran World Relief and served as executives of KCWS in Korea at different times. Mr. Batalden comments as follows:

Lutheran World Relief provided financial support to the KCWS program that varied from 1/3 to 1/2, and the foreign personnel in about the same proportion. Foreign personnel was kept a low figure, usually 4 or 5, whereas total indigenous staff, in the central and district offices, totalled between 175 and 250. Financial input from all sources –including money, food, clothing and medicines– totalled annually 3 to 5 million dollars [in a letter to the present writer dated September 20, 1986].

## LCMS Missionaries in Japan

Since Japan is Korea's near neighbor, it was natural for LCMS missionaries there to extend their interest to Korea during and after the Korean war.

The first LCMS missionary to Japan, Rev. William J. Danker, opened the LCMS work there in 1948.<sup>[26]</sup> In the years that followed Danker's beginnings, a large number of LCMS missionaries were sent to Japan. Today there are some 25,000 Lutherans in Japan of all Lutheran groups. The missionary work in Japan by Lutherans goes back to 1892.

The LCMS missionaries in Japan recognized the great needs on the Korean peninsula resulting from the war and they also realized that there was considerable interest within the Missouri Synod to do some work in Korea. Therefore, in June of 1954 Missionaries William J. Danker and Delmar J. Glock made a trip from Japan to Korea, by the kind arrangement of a Presbyterian missionary, Rev. E. Otto DeCamp. They aimed to investigate the possibility of initiating organized work by the Lutherans, particularly through the Lutheran Hour network, possibly using the tapes of Korean-language programs recorded in Japan.<sup>[27]</sup> The proposal, however, was rejected by the Korean Government which at the time was extremely anti-Japanese.<sup>[28]</sup> Their trip to Korea was encouraged by

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[26] Cf. W. Danker, *Two Worlds or None*, CPH, 1964, pp. 203-258. For the mission work of LCMS in Japan in its early years, one may also consult Arthur H. Strege's B.D. Thesis ("A History of Missouri Synod Work Among the Japanese," June 1952) and S.T.M. Thesis ("A History of Missouri Synod Work in Japan," June 1953) at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

[27] Later, in 1959, Rev. Delwin B. Schneider, then the manager of the Japan Lutheran Hour, came to Korea to assist in establishing the Korea Lutheran Hour.

[28] In the summer of 1953, Won Yong Ji was approached by Mr. Eugene Bernald, the representative of Pan American Broadcasting Service in New

both Dr. Eugene R. Bertermann and Dr. O. H. Schmidt.<sup>[29]</sup> Their report after the visit is significant. (See Documentation III).

## Scandinavians

During the Korean War, the Scandinavian countries also came to the aid of Korea, especially in the area of medical services. They began with a hospital ship during the war, and later followed with the "Scandinavian Medical Center" in Seoul. In the course of the KLM's work in later years, a deacon of the Church of Norway, Mr. Gotfred Rekkebo (his wife, Rane, was a deaconess nurse), was engaged for several years by KLM for its social service operation. However, the Scandinavian churches did not establish Lutheran work in an organized manner, with "the lone exception of a small pocket of Finnish Lutherans in the interior." They were indirectly supportive of the work of the KLM on more than an individual basis.

## 5. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

At last The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) authorized the Synod's entry into Korea at its Synodical Convention held in Houston, Texas, in June 1953.<sup>[30]</sup> In the meantime a mission

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York, for a possible production of a Korean radio program. An initial attempt was made in St. Paul, Minnesota, but discontinued because of the Korean government's refusal of any program produced outside Korea. Cf. the *Lutheran Layman*, Feb. 1, 1954, "Native Korean Aids Lutheran Hour," reported by Eugene R. Bertermann; a similar report in the *St. Louis Lutheran*, Jan. 30, 1954. Also see *Lutheran Layman*, Feb. 1, 1953, p. 3.

[29] See the correspondence of chairman W. J. Danker to the missionaries of the LCMS Japan mission, dated June 24, 1954. The trip was made shortly after a serious surgery of Mrs. Danker. This indicates their sense of urgency for the survey trip to Korea.

[30] *Proceedings* of the 42nd Regular convention of the LCMS, Houston, Texas,



executive of the BFM/LCMS had made a survey trip to Korea. The Rev. Herman H. Koppelman, assistant executive secretary of the BFM, visited Korea from July 17 to 22, 1952, with assistance from Chaplain (Col.) John F. Gaertner, as a part of a year-long field trip to some ten lands in Asia (from July 29, 1951 to July 27, 1952). Korea was included in his summary report to the Board (see Appendix A). After the 1953 convention, Dr. O. H. Schmidt, the executive secretary of BFM/LCMS, made an extensive trip to East Asia in 1954-55. Korea was included in this journey of visitation and exploration, towards the end of 1954, of which the report gives much valuable information on Korea (see Appendix B). The report, which was submitted to the Synodical Board of Directors by the Board of Foreign Missions and included in the Exhibit B dated March 21, 1957 (see Appendix C), makes the following points in regard to the inauguration of mission work in Korea.<sup>[31]</sup>

- 1) The kind of work that the Missouri Synod would do would fit very well into the character of the Korean people.
- 2) Inquiries carried on by Dr. O. H. Schmidt have established that no other Lutheran body seems inclined to undertake work in Korea in the proximate future.

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June 17-26, 1953, p. 455. The following activities of the Board for Foreign Missions related to the Synodical resolution are noted: 1) The Board of Directors of the LCMS gave permission to the Board of Foreign Missions to undertake such studies of Korea as are necessary to ascertain the possibilities and prospects for mission work in Korea (Minutes of BFM, May 19, 1952, p. 7). 2) The BFM decided to ask Prof. E. C. Zimmermann to compile information on Korea which would be helpful if and when the Synod should be ready to enter the field (BFM Minutes, Dec. 15, 1952, p. 7). 3) Attention was called to the fact that Student Won Yong Ji, then studying at the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary, should be kept in mind for Korea. However, the entire situation in Korea today was still so uncertain that no definite action could be taken at the time for the beginning of work in Korea (BFM Minutes, Nov. 16, 1953, p. 5).

[31] *EXHIBIT B*: "Brief regarding missionary work in Korea submitted by the Board of Foreign Missions to the Synodical Board of Directors." This



- 3) The Government of the Republic of Korea is friendly to any effort we might make along the line of establishing our Church in Korea.
- 4) Discussions with leaders of other church bodies working in Korea have also assured us of a cordial welcome.
- 5) The Lutheran Hour is now being broadcast in English over Station HLKY in Seoul and HLKX in Inchon, and responses to radio programs are beginning to come in.
- 6) The Lord of the Church has also placed at Synod's disposal suitable manpower for this undertaking. The fact is that just at this time we have some very valuable manpower available for such a venture into Korea. Mr. Won Yong Ji is about ready to receive his doctor's degree from our seminary, . . . There are several other Korean students in our institutions at the present time. . . who are greatly interested in Korea and who could be recruited for this work.
- 7) In addition to the American staff, Mr. Won Yong Ji is to serve from the outset as a leader in establishing the Korean Lutheran Church on an indigenous basis.<sup>[32]</sup>

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Exhibit in seven pages includes brief description of the Republic of Korea, Christian Missions in Korea, Time and Opportunity for the Missouri Synod, Proposed Plan of Action: First Year, Projection of Financial Requirement, and the Missionary Challenge. All these descriptions were made in the light of the Synodical Resolution on Korea in Houston, Texas, 1953. See *Appendix C*: "EXHIBIT B." This Exhibit was reported by the "Sub-Committee on Korea" on March 21, 1957, appointed by the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, LCMS. The background materials are a report and a letter of Dr. O. H. Schmidt, then the Executive Secretary of BFM, to the Board of Directors of LCMS, dated Jan. 25 (doubtful dating!) and Jan. 28, 1957, respectively.

It is interesting to observe the content and history of this "EXHIBIT B" in the light of the address of Won Yong Ji given to the Board of Foreign Missions on January 21, 1957, which is appended to this book (see *Documentation IV*) and also his B. D. Thesis in 1952 mentioned earlier in this volume. Earlier Mr. Ji was consulted by Prof. E. C. Zimmermann in 1952. Cf. the previous reference note.

[32] These and other thoughts and information are included in the "EXHIBIT B." It ends with a strong appeal to the Board of Directors as follows: "The

In response to the Board of Foreign Missions' report, Synod's Board of Directors approved entry into Korea at its meeting in St. Louis, April 4-5, 1957. A report in the LCMS' official periodical emphasized the following points:

1. "We want to develop almost immediately, with God's help, an *indigenous church in Korea*." [italics are for emphasis] (W. C. Birkner, secretary of the Board.)
2. Won Yong Ji, a Korean student, will receive his Th. D. from the St. Louis seminary in June and will be available to help start the work.
3. The decision was also influenced by the friendly attitude of the Korean Government, the English Lutheran Hour program in Korea then, and contacts made by Missouri Synod members in the Armed Forces.<sup>[33]</sup>

Thus, it was first in May 1957 — four years after the Synodical decision at the Houston Convention and only after cautious consideration and study—that the Board of Foreign Missions

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Synodical resolution of the Houston Convention is now over three years old. We believe that we cannot be charged with precipitate haste if we now respectfully request the implementation of this Synodical resolution. It is the Board's conviction that 'the time and opportunity' for the carrying out of this resolution 'are at hand' and that the necessary open doors have been provided by the Lord of the Church."

- [33] Reported in the *Lutheran Witness*, April 23, 1957, p. 8. Behind that final decision of the Synod, there were also many other people who were prayerfully promoting the opening of the Lutheran mission in Korea, such as Rev. Ernest R. Drews, Rev. Edward H. Schroeder, Prof. William Danker and others. Cf. the writing on "A New Field and a New Chance" by F. Dean Lueking, *AMERICAN LUTHERAN*, June 1957, pp. 607. I spoke frequently and at times wrote about the need of mission work in Korea by the Lutherans, following the outbreak of the war in Korea in 1950. For example, an address at the 47th Convention of the Minnesota District of the LCMS on August 14, 1951, which was later printed in leaflet form under the title "Christ and my Home Land, Korea!" Also see Documentation II.

finally called three American and one Korean clergymen to be the first team for the new mission venture in Korea. For the church body it was a momentous occasion even though Korea was not by any means receiving the foremost attention of the LCMS at that time. There were other events and new mission fields that held the Synod's attention. For example, while Korea was under consideration, India, Japan and New Guinea were being emphasized. Then the Middle East and West Africa opened. South America became yet another focus of interest. It seemed that Korea was put off in a corner for a long time, despite a lot of talk about Korea during and after the Korean War. But at last the decision to enter Korea was implemented.

The four missionary candidates were called to Korea in mid-1957 and commissioned at different times.<sup>[34]</sup> Together with seven couples called to other mission fields, they attended a useful missionary orientation program in July 1957 at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The *Lutheran Witness* made special mention of the group heading to Korea (Aug. 27, 1957, p. 7).

Due to delays in securing their visas, the three American missionaries, L. Paul Bartling, Maynard W. Dorow and Kurt E. Voss, and their families did not leave for Korea until early December. Traveling by ship as far as Japan, the three men made a trip by plane to Korea to arrange for housing, arriving at Seoul on January 13, 1958; their families followed a few weeks later, arriving on February 20. Won Yong Ji returned to Korea with his family on September 26, 1958, after a year of parish ministry in St. Paul, Minnesota.<sup>[35]</sup>

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[34] Cf. the pamphlet, "Handbook on Korea Lutheran Mission" written and edited by Won Yong Ji, Ladies Aid of Jehovah Ev. Luth. Church, 1958, 8 pages (cf. Ch. IV, 5 of this book).

[35] Cf. the "Diploma of Vocation for Korea" to Won Yong Ji, dated May 23, and Dr. O. H. Schmidt's covering letter to Ji dated May 22, 1957.

**Part Two**

**The Formative Years of KLM**

## Chapter IV

### Principles and Operation

#### 1. At the KLM Doorstep

On a windy cold winter day, January 13, 1958, Lutheran missionaries Paul Bartling, Maynard Dorow and Kurt E. Voss arrived at Kimpo International Airport near Seoul. Upon their arrival at a yet shabby terminal, they were surprised to find a group of Koreans welcoming them. Soon they found out that this was a dissident group of Protestant clergymen and laymen, headed by a Presbyterian military Chaplain C. Later the missionaries discovered that there was in fact more than one group like this.<sup>[1]</sup> Each group was claiming that they were instrumental in inviting the Lutheran mission to Korea. As early as Jan. 27, 1958 (no. 442) *Ki-Dok Kong-Bo*, the Presbyterian Weekly, reported an item of news evidently released by Chaplain C's group. It mentions the arrival of three Lutheran missionaries; Young-Sik CHO and three other Koreans who had taken courses at a Lutheran Theological Seminary in Japan; the negotiation of entry of the Lutheran Mission having been made in 1953; and information about the LCMS (not accurate). The headline of this report reads: "Entry of Lutheran Mission; Interest Centered on Organizing a Church Body."

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[1] There was a group of people using the name "Lutheran Fellowship" with men like Revs. CHOI Youngwhan; CHO Insook; KIM Haesung; Dr. SHIN Sagoon, and others. They had made contact with Lutheran chaplains like Werner R. Saar. When the LCMS missionaries arrived in Korea, they were already divided into two (or more) groups. Some of these names appear again in later years in different contexts.

In a letter to the BFM/LCMS toward the end of January, 1958, Missionary Voss explained the situation at that time, as follows:

Perhaps the greatest strain on [Lutheran] Chaplain Saar's time [prior to the arrival of the LCMS missionaries] and energy has been the many and frequent delegations of such who wish to call themselves Korea Lutherans. These delegations have become increasingly insistent. Among the most insistent are now two groups springing originally from one. This split group on the one hand is led by the Lt. Col. Chaplain Choi and for the other a certain Dr Shin is the spokesman. Almost every day now since we've been here one or the other and sometimes both groups or parts of both groups would either find us here at the chaplain's office or at our guest house. From what we can determine so far the question of motivation is rather doubtful and interest does not proceed from real conviction about basic Lutheran principles over against Calvinist, Reformed background. It seems often to be discontent with existing organizations (as one group states it, 'to reform the church which has been corrupted by opportunism, localism, sectarianism' or reasons to that effect).

We are trying to give them as patient a hearing as possible. However, we have been and are continually making clear to them that we will concentrate on our language study, that we will remain neutral until the time comes when we can talk with them in their own language and understand them in that language, that even then we will proceed with caution dealing with individuals, that we intend to support no one with foreign moneys and that, after all, our primary purpose is to bring the Gospel to those who as yet do not believe.

Won Yong Ji's brother has been to see us too. His plea has been, too, that we do not become involved with either of these groups.<sup>[2]</sup>

For a number of weeks these groups kept seeking out the Lutheran missionaries, seeking their approval and cooperation in organizing a Lutheran denomination. Naturally these groups did

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[2] This statement was quoted in Dr. Koppelman's letter to Ji dated February 14, 1958.

not speak well of each other. The situation was indeed confusing and at times annoying. With the practical assistance of Mr. Won Sang Ji, my brother, the newly organized Korea Lutheran Mission (KLM) made an "open statement" (*insa malsum*) to the public through various church newspapers.<sup>[3]</sup> The KLM "open statement" contained these thoughts:

- 1) Appreciation for the warm welcome to Korea.
- 2) Profound respect and joy for the courageous effort in rehabilitating the land devastated by the war, and the enormous growth and mission activities of Christendom under the leadership of many pastors and missionaries.
- 3) For some time, we [Lutheran missionaries] would engage in studying the language and learning about Korean history and culture which can be vital for our work.
- 4) At the present we are not yet engaged in concrete work nor are we associated with any individual or group or organization. This we want to make very clear.
- 5) Our earnest wish is to bring Christ to the un-churched and in due time establish an indigenous Korean Lutheran Church. (by KLM Missionaries dated March 11, 1958)

The above mentioned statement was featured in two Christian dailies. The *Ki-Dok Kong-Bo* published it under the heading (March 24, 1958): "Lutheran Missionary Group Careful with Contacts; Emphasis on Literature and Electronic Media." *Ki-Dok Shi-Bo*'s heading (March 15, 1958) was: "Cultivate Self-Standing Church; KLM Outlines Mission Plan." In these two reports I, as a Korean national missionary, was mentioned for the first time with a brief *vitae* and my plan for returning to Korea in the near future.

The publication of this statement set forth the correct understanding of the basic intention of the KLM and cleared up some of the rumors and falsehoods circulated by the dissident

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[3] E.g. ;*Ki-Dok Kong-Bo*, No. 448: March 24, 1958; *Han-Kook Ki-Dok Shi-Bo*, No. 189: March 15, 1958.



groups. Some of these groups had gone so far as to issue statements in the name of the Lutheran mission, thereby giving false impressions of the KLM, creating suspicion in the mainstream of Korean Christianity, and jeopardizing the future course of the KLM. Furthermore, the statement discouraged these groups from continuing to approach the KLM with their false assumptions and wishful thinking.

The very first item of the minutes of the first KLM meeting, on March 26, 1958, affirmed what the missionaries had said in their "open statement" published in the Christian newspapers. The minutes read:

In order to avoid misunderstandings regarding the official position of the mission in its immediate plans for evangelistic work and in its dealings with the many Christians of Korea who claim to be Lutherans or who may want to become Lutherans in the immediate future, the conference unanimously underscored its hard and fast policy of avoiding entanglements or commitments to any individual or groups at this time. Language study over an extended period demands full time attention. During this time the complex church situation can be further studied.

Thus the KLM made its objectives clear from the start, that is, to evangelize the unchurched and to establish a self-propagating, self-governing and self-supporting national Lutheran Church.

Meanwhile, I was in St. Paul, Minnesota, doing parish work at Jehovah Ev. Lutheran Church. I received a number of reports from various Korean publications. One informer, a certain Mr. KBK (purposely abbreviated), voluntarily wrote me four hand-written pages dated March 1, 1958, describing the confusing situation around the KLM. Its content verified all the facts gathered thus far in a systematic manner. The KLM and the BFM were given a translation of this informative writing with a cover letter from me dated March 9, 1958. My personal stance on these "religion brokers" was clearly communicated to Dr. H. H. Koppelman on



Feb. 12, 1958. Understandably enough, the KLM missionaries were somewhat perplexed by this unexpected flood of 'dissidents,' but the KLM's cautious and churchmanlike handling of the situation avoided undesirable entanglements and helped preserve a "clean beginning."

After 28 years Dr. Maynard Dorow, one of that first trio of American missionaries, recollects the situation in these words:

Upon arrival in Korea on January 13, 1958, our missionary contingent was met at the airport by a group of Protestant pastors and lay people who were already calling themselves the Lutheran Church of Korea. Having gotten wind of plans by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to begin work in Korea, a Presbyterian chaplain (colonel) of the Korean military had gathered a motley group of independent and dissident church people to prepare for our arrival. They had received encouragement from well-meaning Lutheran chaplains with the United States military in Korea. And they had been quick to learn that the way to ingratiate themselves with representatives of the LC-MS was to profess above all their concern for pure doctrine. But their more practical agenda soon became evident in their request for funds and materials to aid their small congregations. The nature of this amalgam of dissidents became further evident when it divided into two self-proclaimed Lutheran groups, one favoring a presidential system and the other a committee system of church management. To make short a story that went on for many months, the KLM listened carefully for a time to these people but finally refused their ready-made church. Then, to avoid any misunderstanding the KLM used the press to inform the public that it was not to be associated with any Korean churches or groups which called themselves Lutheran and to make clear that its purpose in Korea was to witness to the gospel in word and in action, and to contribute to the unity, not to the disruption of the Korean church. [4]

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[4] In his paper on "The Lutheran Church in Korea: Its Background and Confessional Stance," Documentation VIII.

## 2. A "Clean Beginning "

The term "clean beginning," referring to the Lutheran work in Korea, was first used by the prominent Lutheran missiologist, Dr. William J. Danker. He wrote a number of articles for the cause and work of the KLM in the 1960s. His stimulating and informative book, *Two Worlds Or None* (CPH, 1964), devoted a generous 26 pages to Korea and the KLM. His words have been quoted in a number of LCMS mission publications, as well as in the book, *Moving Frontiers*.<sup>[5]</sup>

The first team of LCMS missionaries strove to avoid something which could not be edifying nor God-pleasing in the midst of the church factions and schisms of Korean Christendom in the 1950s. For that reason, they were extremely cautious with the "dissident" Christians and clergymen who approached the KLM. Frequently, individuals wanted to become 'Lutheran' without going through due instruction in the form of adult confirmation. In other instances, splinter groups from existing denominations approached the KLM to join the Lutheran church, often with ulterior motives. A careful reading of the KLM Minutes in the early years may enlighten us in this regard. Furthermore, the action of the KLM at that time could not be appropriately understood and appreciated without knowing the peculiar situation of the churches in the Korea in the 1950s as taken up in an earlier chapter (Ch. II, 3). The KLM's concern and interest may be summarized, negatively and positively:

- not to promote, in a narrow sense, the cause of a Lutheran 'denomination';
- not to "steal" members from other church bodies in Korea;

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[5] Edited by Carl S. Meyer, Concordia Publishing House, 1964, pp. 331, 333-34.

- not to compete unnecessarily with the existing denominations in Korea;
- to be a faithful and energetic ‘witness’ of Jesus Christ to the world and in the world, i.e., in Korea;
- to be a ‘plus’ to Korean Christendom;
- to strengthen the existing Christendom of Korea;
- to promote the theology of Martin Luther and the heritage of the Reformation Christianity;
- to carry out the common tasks of Christians, such as welfare in cooperation with other Christians in Korea.<sup>[6]</sup>

The effort to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the people in all walks of life in Korea was not easy. If to say “no” to the dissident clergymen of other denominations was hard and confusing, to lead the unbelievers to say “yes” to the Gospel was even more difficult, and sometimes discouraging. An additional burden for the KLM was the fact that Christianity had long been known to Christians and non-Christians alike in Korea in terms of certain stereotyped images and a certain style of expressing religious life and spirituality. The predominantly ‘Reformed’ tradition and the strong pentecostal fervor of Christian life in Korea were at times a difficult handicap for establishing new Lutheran work. Often people considered ‘Lutheran’ to be a strange religious ‘sect’ other than Christian.

Likewise, the rapid rise of Pentecostalist groups and charismatic practices by the churches in the present time are a considerable hindrance to the work of a sacramental and liturgical church body like the Lutheran Church. The Anglican Church in Korea also has experienced similar problems and still remains a small church body after nearly a century of work in Korea. Indeed, it is an unfulfilled task for the Lutherans in Korea today to make clear what could be uniquely “Lutheran spirituality” which may be

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[6] Presented by Won Yong Ji to a group of Lutherans from Finland visiting Korea, Aug. 7, 1984.

a strength and new impetus to Korean Christendom, and how to make this spirituality meaningful to the people in the midst of all types of pentecostal spiritualities visible in Korea.

### 3. Principle and Practice

Professor William Danker in his early writing described the LCMS involvement in Korea in the following ways:<sup>[7]</sup>

- 1) Nowhere else has a new mission of the LCMS had such a clear plan of operation in mind before it began. . . so conscientiously attempted to carry out the plan.
- 2) Perhaps nowhere so much as in Korea was a mission sorely tempted to accept dissidents from other groups, and nowhere was that temptation more stoutly resisted.
- 3) Nowhere in the non-Western missions begun by the LCMS has leadership been exerted so much by a national as in Korea. . .

We may also add that nowhere else was there so much discussion of mission 'principles' as in the LCMS work in Korea. Whenever the mission principle was discussed, the phrase "on an indigenous basis" came up. Many of the writings of the BFM/LCMS and the KLM at that time bear this out. Sometimes 'indigenous' was almost identified with the "three-self principles" (self-propagation, self-governing, self-supporting) of the "Nevius Plan" used by the Presbyterian Church in Korea. In a lengthy report on the work of KLM, it is stated:

Expect no banner headlines, the missionaries were told in pre-operation briefings, at least not for a long time. The Korean

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[7] William Danker, *Two Worlds or None*, pp. 275-78.

Lutheran Mission was to take the “long view” approach, which from the outset looks to a national church growing on its own soil out of its own response to the Holy Spirit’s call and leading.<sup>[8]</sup>

Were the BFM and its leaders sure about what they were saying so frequently and so generally? Nowhere, it seems, did they articulate the “indigenous principle” or describe the meaning of “indigenous,” other than referring to the “Nevius Method.”<sup>[9]</sup> I had heard repeated talk about the “indigenous principle” even in my seminary days in St. Louis in the early 1950s. As it was discussed with no clear definition and without being engaged in actual work in Korea, it sometimes annoyed me. As early as August 8, 1957, I made an address, upon request, to a meeting of the Ladies Aid Society of Jehovah Lutheran church in St. Paul under the topic “Indigenous (national) Church,” and again spoke in June, 1958, in St. Louis to the BFM/LCMS on the title “Indigenous’ Mission Program (for Korea).”<sup>[10]</sup> These two addresses are substantially the same. In summary:

- 1) An indigenous mission program must be the ultimate GOAL of mission; it is not to be understood as an achieved state.
- 2) Invest enough manpower and resources in a place like Korea where there are many denominations, missionaries, national workers, and at the same time a vast amount of needs prevailing.
- 3) The workers in the field, national pastors and missionaries should decide the final policies of mission in consultation with the BFM.

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[ 8 ] *The Lutheran Witness*, Sept. 4, 1962, “KOREA: Mission with a Long View,” p. 10.

[ 9 ] On the “Nevius Method,” cf. Ch. II, 2, ref. note 2.

[10] See: Documentation V. Furthermore, I outlined some of my ideas and suggestions for the future Lutheran work in Korea in my unpublished B. D. Thesis at Concordia Seminary: “Mission Approach of Lutheran Church to Korea,” 1952, pp. 41-46, 58, 62. Missionary Richard C. Pfaff to Korea comments in his research paper in May, 1983: “As will be seen, all of these suggestions and observations [of Won Yong Ji] became a part of the Lutheran Work in Korea.” (p. 22)

- 4) Mission policy must be flexible, determined by the situation of the field. Policy for work; not work for policy.

On the basis of this understanding, I outlined in a letter my thoughts for consideration by both the missionary colleagues already in Korea and the BFM in St. Louis.<sup>[11]</sup> These thoughts were later reflected in the timely and historic public "open statement" by the KLM missionaries on March 11, 1958, which was mentioned previously.

From the inception of the KLM, the missionaries and the Mission Board in the United States made special efforts to carry through some of these principles.<sup>[12]</sup>

It took considerable time, I believe, for the BFM and my expatriate missionary colleagues to show complete confidence in

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[11] In my letter to Dr. H. H. Koppelman of BFM, dated Feb. 20, 1958, and copied to the missionaries in Korea, the following thoughts were included:

- 1) The primary concern of our Lutheran Church Mission is the non-Christian population of Korea, rather than the professed Christians.
- 2) As a matter of policy and Christian conviction, we respect denominational lines, and are not interested in proselytizing, neither the members nor the leaders of any Christian denomination in Korea. We welcome, however, any sincere inquirer regarding our teachings and practices.
- 3) We will undertake a vigorous mission program as soon as preparations have been made and plans formulated.
- 4) The main concern of our missionaries at this moment is to learn the Korean language, observe and study about Korea and its situation and culture.
- 5) We welcome any friendly comment and suggestion, with honest and sincere evangelical intentions, to our Lutheran Mission in Korea.
- 6) The ultimate goal of our Lutheran Mission in Korea is to establish an indigenous Korean Lutheran Church, propagated, governed, and supported by the Koreans themselves.

[12] See the Minutes, '64-25 (June 6, 1964). KLM Rambling Record, Jan. 4-7, 1965 (with Dr. Koppelman and Rev. Strege), pp. 1-3. For further information, also cf. KLM Minutes, May 8, 1960; 63-29f.

me. To have confidence in a human being takes time. For some years, I had the feeling that the BFM and its executives in St. Louis had an attitude of "let's wait and see" or "keep an eye on him" toward me, somewhat cautious, not necessarily suspicious. This seemed to be also evident in the early days of KLM, especially by its chairman. In retrospect it is amusing to note the chairman's sensitivity in this regard when he took strong issue with a mistaken reference like "... Ji, who **heads** Synod's first task force in Korea. . ." (*Lutheran Witness*, Nov. 15, 29, 1960; bold face for emphasis.)<sup>[13]</sup>

As a matter of fact, from the beginning of the Lutheran work in Korea I never assumed a chairmanship nor had a "head" title of any kind in the KLM except the position of the "Representative of the Lutheran Hour" as my business card used to indicate.

KLM's strong emphasis both in principle and practice during its first decade was the use of mass media, both printed and electronic, for evangelism. This method used to be known in KLM circles as the "A-approach," in contrast to the traditional mission approach of various denominations, namely, establishing a church body right away and expanding the denomination, which we called the "B-approach." KLM did not ignore nor overlook the value of the "B-approach," but its priority was placed in the early years on the "A-approach."<sup>[14]</sup> Realizing the peculiar church situation in Korea and the need of the society in general in the '50s and '60s (cf. Ch. II, 3), it seemed to be a wise choice. Some of the results are visible today. A positive image of the Lutherans has been created; a cooperative, not competitive, atmosphere established. Such a conducive working climate has been concretely and vividly demonstrated in the successful venture of the Korean Bethel Bible

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[13] See the Minutes of the Missionary Conference of KLM, Feb. 6, 1961, p. 3. See the quote from Danker's letter to Voss, Ch. XIII, 2.

[14] See KLM Minutes, Nov. 8, 1969, 88-89.

Study Program, since 1974, which operates across all denominational lines with almost no suspicion or misunderstanding.

#### **4. Interpersonal Relationships**

From early experience the KLM learned the importance of interpersonal relationships. No two missionaries are the same, nor can two Koreans ever be identical. Each one has his/her own personality and characteristics. It is further complicated when it comes to the interracial and inter-national relationships. These persons—American and Korean—formed the KLM which was the only governing body during the first decade, juridically and administratively. All decisions were made by this body, in consultation with the BWM/LCMS in America. Truly, a heavy responsibility was vested in it. It had the first and final word, so to speak. Its membership consisted of all Lutheran expatriate missionaries in Korea and one Korean national member, myself. They were ‘equal’ in every respect except one — that I was a “national missionary worker in Korea” as indicated in my “Diploma of Vocation” (5-23-1957). This meant, in practical terms, that I received a Korean level of remuneration, salary and other benefits.

The above created a very difficult situation for me. I was literally sandwiched between expatriates and Korean nationals, mostly office-workers at that time, in all their interest areas. It was especially hard for me when a conflict of interest occurred between the two groups. There was no small pressure from the increasing number of Korean staff as in matters of their salary, working conditions and other benefits, in which I myself was included. That was not all. As time went on, they began expressing their opinions about what the KLM should be doing in Korea. Not infrequently I was considered to be too soft in dealing with the



KLM for the interest of Korea and the Korean staff's welfare. At the same time, some KLM members might have thought that I was too one-sided. At any rate, I knew very well the position as well as the limitation of the KLM as the governing body of the Lutherans in Korea.

From this kind of uncomfortable sensitive situation, I learned a vital lesson in life, namely, the importance of interpersonal relationships. When relationships on a human level go wrong, in a wide society or in a smaller circle, all other things may go wrong even to the point of self-destruction. I often used an illustration of oil and grease in a car. Without oil and grease, the engine, even with the powerful energy from gasoline, will be destroyed, not to mention the functioning of the car. Similarly, smooth relationships in an organization like the KLM make the working atmosphere attractive, happy and conducive. Professional efficiency depends largely upon amicable human relationships. They are in positive correlation. This truism has been clearly expressed in some of my subsequent writings and addresses, e.g., in my study of "The Role of the Missionary Today" in the mid-1960s and my later German book, *Meines Bruders Hüter* (published by ELM Verlag in Erlangen, Germany, in 1979).

The success and happy time which KLM enjoyed can rightly be attributed to the cooperation and understanding of its members with its Korean staff at all levels of work. There was no major friction or counter-productive controversy during that time. Naturally, there were at times some minor conflicts of opinions, but all were manageable and ended with mutual understanding and satisfaction. When things go well, one may not so readily realize the significance of "interpersonal relationships." One only knows its value when things are at the brink of destruction. The cordial relationship which we are talking about here is no doubt essential in all human society, from a family to a nation to an international community. This truth was substantiated through my

later work experience in Switzerland, Germany, and the United States, often in an international theatre of engagement. How can relationships be maintained in an amicable manner? The answer can be complex. One definite factor is the right attitude and dedication to a common cause by the people involved. Some may be better suited than others, no doubt. Choosing the right people for certain work is, therefore, more important than finding money or other resources.

The KLM's strength, in my estimation, was that we could talk about anything and everything related to the KLM without concern about disagreement. Only issues related to the good of the KLM, not one's personal aggrandisement, were on its agenda. Therefore, each of us could talk openly with personal conviction. The KLM was already 'Korean' in its ethos, for its foremost concern was 'Korea,' not acting as an agent of a sending church body from overseas.

One of my treasured experiences in the KLM for a decade was this cordial interpersonal relationship with my colleagues who shared the same high aspiration, enthusiasm and joy for work. Without exaggeration I would testify that the real strength was in the "KLM spirit" among its members as one team with one purpose of work in mind. (See: KLM Rambling Record of 10 November 1969, p. 5, #27, and also KLM Minutes 69-88, Nov. 8, 1969).

## 5. KLM Personalities

Without question the people of KLM determined its profile. It is therefore necessary to give some attention to the missionaries in the formative years of the KLM. They were assets not only to the KLM, but also for the later development of the LCK. These men and their spouses served different lengths of time in Korea. (Cf. the List of Missionaries, Appendix G)

The Lutherans in Korea will long remember the manifold contributions of Rev. L. Paul Bartling and his talented wife Ruth, a Yale M.A. in public health. During their service in Korea for 18 years, Missionary Bartling did many valuable things as secretary and chairman of the KLM, later co-chairman, and as the vice-president of the Lutheran church in Korea (LCK), and many other auxiliary duties. His dedication for Korea's cause and his dynamic personality meant much to the KLM's work. He was an inspiration and an encouragement to his colleagues. With the personality of an 'accelerator' type, Paul often pushed for the work at the right time and in the right manner during his tenure of service in Korea. I treasure highly my close association with the Bartlings. They love and miss Korea and LCK, I know.

The veteran missionary in Wanhhsien and Hankow, China (1939-1946), Rev. Kurt E. Voss, and his Norwegian wife, Eli, worked in Korea for five years and then terminated their service. Possibly due to some unhappy experiences in China which I heard from him and the kind of his personal style of life, he might not have had a satisfying time in Korea, professionally speaking, nor did the national church at this end have much benefit from his stay. Some of his passive attitude towards the Korean situation might have originated from his previous experience in China. His action did not quite match with his "mission principle," and his leadership somehow faltered. (Rev. P. Strege's "Notes on Korea Visit," 5-7-1963). About a week prior to his departure, Missionary Voss came to his only Korean colleague at the KLM, myself, and asked whether or not he should return to Korea after a year of furlough in America. I responded with these words with a heavy feeling: "As I see the situation, it may be better not to return for your own professional satisfaction, possibly, and for the good of the Lutheran Church in Korea." Recalling the occasion of a quarter century ago, I still feel that it was one of the difficult moments in my life to use such seemingly harsh words to a colleague of some five years in

order to be truthful to the issue for the well - being of the church. All these comments are by no means meant to minimize the warm personality and hospitality of Kurt and Eli Voss. One noteworthy contribution of Missionary Voss, the senior man at that time and the chairperson of the KLM during his entire tenure of service, was his role as a 'guard', fending off the troublesome "dissidents" in the early period of the KLM. This was certainly important at that time. After leaving Korea, he served a parish in Ohio, and following a prolonged illness, he died in 1983.

The quiet gentleman and scholar, Maynard Dorow, and his gifted wife Shirley, a professionally trained deaconess with a thoughtful Christian personality, are still patiently and effectively serving in Korea. In addition to many 'hats' including the treasurer of the KLM and the LCK and an associate pastor of a congregation, he is currently serving as the president of the newly established Luther Seminary at Shingal, near Seoul. Maynard earned an S.T.M. degree in 1963, and later Concordia Seminary in St. Louis conferred on him a D.D. degree in recognition of his outstanding service in Korea. The Dorows are the only ones who were with the KLM from the very beginning, under all the "raining and snowing" as the Koreans say. Maynard's thoughtfulness and tactful personality have often saved certain delicate situations for the good of all parties concerned. I often used the analogy of "accelerator Bartling" and "brake Dorow." A brake is indispensable, always and everywhere. It saves life and indeed the car itself. Mrs. Shirley Dorow has been a frequent writer on the Lutheran work in Korea and acts as an instructor of English at a college in Seoul and Luther Seminary. No words can be totally adequate to compliment all their remarkable work.

Already over a quarter of a century of service has been given to Korea by Hilbert ("George") Riemer and his wife Joan, a school teacher and writer. Among other indispensable roles George has been ably assuming that of "mass media man" for many years,

including the managership of the Korean Lutheran Hour, and the task of "International Correspondent" for the LCK. The Korea field experience has trained him as a top level mass media expert in East Asia. I have observed his performance in actual engagement for the cause of the KLM and later for the LCK on both the national and international scenes. Although his frequent jokes and thick humor are sometimes beyond the grasp of his Korean colleagues, his love for Korea and its people shine through clearly.

With different lengths of time and different degrees of involvement, the KLM had a number of other dedicated missionaries, such as James Lauer, John Hodde, Dick Mackoy, Charles Lentner, and Diakon Gotfred Rekkebo from Norway, just to mention only those who were in Korea during the first decade of the KLM. (See the list of expatriate missionaries, Appendix G)

The only Korean member of the KLM, myself, served as pastor, translator, writer, professor, speaker as occasions arose, — a 'Jack of all trades,' so to speak. I am extremely fortunate to have met in my pilgrimage of life someone whose insight, judgment and dedication have meant so much to my type of vocation. It is none other than my wife, Aei-Kyong Kim (nee), originally from Anju, Korea ('North') and a graduate of Allegheny College, Pennsylvania. We met each other in America and were married on June 18, 1957 in St. Louis, Missouri.

All these missionaries mentioned above did their share with a high sense of dedication and professional competency. Each of them contributed in their own distinct manner to the glory of our Savior Jesus Christ and to the enhancement of Lutheranism in Korea.

## Chapter V

# Ministry and Evangelism

### 1 . And so the Work Began

Although KLM gave priority to ministry through mass media, direct evangelistic outreach was not neglected. In fact, one of the first things undertaken was in the area of evangelistic ministry, as early as February 1959. The following is a vivid eyewitness account of the first outreach classes, written by Major Leonard J. Chase, then stationed in Korea and now a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Eugene, Oregon.<sup>[1]</sup>

"February 15, 1959 was not just another Sunday in Korea, not just another Lord's Day in the history of our church. This day the history of the Lutheran Church began a new page in the chapter concerning Missions in Korea. Yes, this day was a new 'First'. The first Lutheran Faith information class conducted for Koreans in the Korean language was taught that day by the Reverend Dr. Won Yong Ji.

"But let's go back a little and learn how this came about because it just didn't happen suddenly. Ever since the missionary families have arrived here a little over a year ago, all but Dr. Ji have been busy learning the Korean language. Anyone who has been in an Oriental country knows well what a problem this may be. Together

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[1] Major Leonard J. Chase wrote this article (somewhat shortened here) on March 21, 1959, and distributed copies to the *Lutheran Witness*, *Lutheran Layman*, *St. Louis Lutheran*, and *Minnesota Lutheran* under the title "THE KOREAN MISSION TODAY." Currently Mr. Chase is a consultant for Emergency Preparedness Education and Training, and lives in Eugene, Oregon.

with learning the language they have had to learn about the land, its people and customs as well as change many of their own customs, many times sacrificing comforts as we know them, in order to live amongst these people as neighbors and to know them better.

"In the process of making these adjustments, they have met many Korean people. Since they cannot speak the language too well yet, the people they come in contact with may or may not be impressed with them. This reminds me of the preacher who once said, 'You may be the only Bible your neighbor reads.' These contacts, together with the relatives of Dr. Ji, his wife and friends, make up a great potential for the Lutheran Church. In addition to this, Dr. Ji has written a tract to be handed to friends and other prospects. Some of the Lutheran Servicemen as well as US Civil Service employees for the Military Establishment in the Seoul area also assist in passing out tracts to Korean acquaintances.

"On 8 February 1959, invitations were handed out to all contacts, inviting interested persons to attend an information class on Sunday, February 15, 1959 in the Conference Room at the YMCA, Seoul, Korea.

"Finding space in an extremely crowded city is always difficult. The task wasn't particularly easy but was accomplished. The time of 10 : 30 AM was not particularly a good time perhaps but that is what was available. The room was small and had no heat, but was the only room available. There were many such problems, but then, so did the disciples of old have many similar ones. If the missionaries continue to wait for a better time and a better place the Gospel may never be preached and the people may never be reached.

"Since this was to be a first time, a historic event for the Lutheran Church, I was invited to attend and accepted the privilege. In my eagerness I arrived a few minutes early. The day was quite chilly with intermittent rain and sleet. The high hills and

mountains surrounding Seoul were covered with snow wherever visible. I personally felt that perhaps this damp cold weather might discourage some would-be attenders from coming.

"The YMCA [at that time in 1959] is not what one would imagine after visiting some in the States. The original YMCA was destroyed and this is just a temporary, one-story structure. The Conference Room had two rows of benches along each wall where three adults could sit on each bench. The room was approximately 12 feet wide and 30 feet long. There was a pulpit in the front and old foot pump organ along the wall towards the rear. As I mentioned earlier the room had no heat. Dr. Ji, thoughtful as always, brought a portable kerosene stove to help remove the chill. I sat in the rear of the room with Reverend Paul Bartling and at first I was sure that even a little heat wouldn't find it's way down the aisle to our bench. Needless to say we wore our overcoats.

"Just before Dr. Ji started, I noted that the gathering included about 20 people. In the small room it looked like a crowd. Mrs. Ji was present and welcomed the ladies while Mr. Kim, Mrs. Ji's brother, acted as an usher in the hallway for latecomers. Since there were Christians present Dr. Ji's program started with a devotional prayer, Scripture reading, a hymn, short sermon and then closed with a prayer. After this short devotional service, Dr. Ji started to instruct about the Teachings of the Lutheran Church. Outlines were passed out to the attenders so that they might follow the instruction and also use in study on their own later. By this time the room was really full of people as 34 persons crowded into the service.

"Since I could not understand the Korean language I had to sense what was being said. I also had an opportunity to observe the people present which included men and women, boys and girls, rich and poor. I noted that each person was most attentive and appeared eager to hear what was being said. Dr. Ji not only had a pleasant, radiant personality, an excellent speaking voice, the



ability to project his thoughts to the audience and every other characteristic and quality that makes an excellent preacher, but he injects just the right amount of humour. I noted that the audience was always with him, keeping their eyes fast upon him. During the service a blind man was ushered into a seat by a woman who sat next to him. Although it was cold and wet outside and discomfort was evident in his face as he took a seat, within 2 minutes he was smiling and his expression during the rest of the morning was always pleasant. The meeting ended just before noon and a new experience was added to my life and to my tour of duty in Korea.

"I also attended the third meeting which was held in the same room at the same time on 1 March 1959. It was noted that the room remained filled despite a National Holiday Parade going on outside. A free-will offering bowl has been added to the service for individual gifts and offerings to help start the new church. This is not passed around as in regular church services but rather is placed before the pulpit and those desiring to make a gift may do so as they leave at the end of the class. For the size of the group it was felt that offerings were very generous. As they purposed in their hearts so they give. From their offerings, which sometimes are sacrificial in nature, we can learn how thankful these people are that Christianity has come to their country."

On May 17, 1959, Immanuel Lutheran Church (later, To Bong Lutheran congregation) was founded from the above initial gathering, and I baptized on the same day five adults and our infant son, born on May 9th. Together with this group seven other adults were received into full membership of the church through the rite of confirmation.<sup>[2]</sup> On this memorable occasion Major John Chase presented a silver communion set to the church as a gift.

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[2] *Lutheran Witness*, Nov. 3, 1959, p. 511: A report with photo on "Missionaries Lay Foundation for Self Propagating, Self-Governing, Self-Supporting Church In Korea."

At this point of unfolding the past, it seems to be appropriate to mention the encouragement and support of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) in America to the work of the KLM, throughout the years, especially for my family and my work. In the early years, prior to the opening of the work in Korea, the LWML of Minnesota District granted me a scholarship to study at Heidelberg University in Germany, and the ladies of the LWML in Wisconsin and Illinois contributed funds for purchasing our house at Shin-Dang-Dong in Seoul (which was duly recorded as the property of KLM) in 1959 and a jeep for my work (though I did not use it personally).<sup>[3]</sup>

## 2. Lutheran Theological Academy (LTA) and *Luther Study*

Highly significant for the future development of the Lutheran Church in Korea was the founding of a formal theological training program in 1965. The KLM needed to train pastors and evangelists to carry forward its resolution to establish congregations and to become a viable Lutheran Church. Students were enrolled in the "Lutheran Theological Academy" (LTA) which offered a "house of studies" type program in association with Yonsei University in Seoul. The plan had been drawn up in 1964, with a responsible committee organized and director appointed.

Under this program Lutheran pastors were trained until the establishment of Luther Seminary in 1983. I assumed the directorship of LTA until my move to Geneva, Switzerland, in

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[3] *Lutheran Women's Quarterly*, April 1960. For other items of interest, also see *Ibid.*, July 1960; April 1965, July 1966, Winter 1969, Fall 1971. (These references are parts of the list on LWML and Korea and its contributions to the work of KLM.)

1968. Missionary Maynard Dorow then took over the program, and has directed it since that time. In a later chapter (XIII) we will take up LTA and Luther Seminary, the successor of LTA, in greater detail.

The relatively short-lived *Luther Study* quarterly left another small but significant mark under the work of LTA. With the primary purpose of introducing Luther's thoughts and his writings to Korea, this modest venture began in 1964. Simultaneously, a Luther Study Club was also organized among advanced theological students, pastors and Luther-interested scholars. The journal included, primarily, Luther's writings in Korean, brief notations on Luther study around the world, and an occasional scholarly article on Luther. Due to the limited number of readers and participants, its circulation was also limited, about 500 copies for each issue. This mini-journal in the ocean of literature in Korea has been quoted by surprisingly many writers on Luther and the Reformation. From time to time one can notice even today references made to *Luther Study*. Due to my move to Geneva in 1968, this journal was discontinued, as I was the editor.

### 3. Ministry of Social Service

Another aspect of the KLM's work was social ministry. The goal was to translate the Good News of the salvation in Jesus Christ into action on behalf of the physical needs of the people—faith in action, Christian love in practice. The physical and spiritual needs of the human being always go together. Life cannot be meaningful unless both are recognized and met. Neither dimension of the need dare be denied or neglected.<sup>[4]</sup> From the very outset, the KLM was mindful of its Christian social responsibility in the area of Christian "diakonia" in the form of counselling and distributing relief materials. At that time, the scars of the war were still visible among the poor and in the resettlement areas in congested

sections of the nation's capital, Seoul.

In 1966, Diakon Rekkebo of the Church of Norway accepted an appointment by the KLM to direct its social service program. Both he and Mrs. Rekkebo came to the KLM after longtime service as missionary-social workers in China and Korea. Diakon Rekkebo launched this new work by establishing an outreach of mercy and service through the KLM congregations as well as through an office-centered social work program. Two Korean social workers, Mr. Deuk-Won YOON and Mrs. Sung-Hee LEE, worked under his direction. People were helped, the cold made warm, the distressed given comfort, and self-help type programs developed, such as providing sewing machines to the poor and war widows, all in the name of Jesus Christ who indeed enables us to serve our fellow human beings. During his seven years of service with the KLM, Diakon Rekkebo contributed in his own special way, helping pastors and laypeople alike to communicate the meaning of 'Christian service' in the actual Korean situation.<sup>[5]</sup>

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[4] In earlier years I expressed some of my thoughts related to this point of both physical and spiritual needs of the human being: cf. my unpublished memorandum (then as the Secretary for Asia of LWF) to Professor Mikko Juva, the president of LWF, on January 18, 1971, under the title, "Has the Church a Message?" and copied to the members of 'LWF Cabinet' at that time (six single-spaced typewritten pages). This memorandum treats what should be the true role of the church and Christians without losing a 'balance.' A copy of this writing can be found in my private study under "Writings during the time in Geneva." Also cf. my article "Evangelization and Humanization" in *Concordia Theological Monthly*, March 1971, pp. 163-72; and for its German copy, see Kommission für Kirchliche Zusammenarbeit (of LWF), Konsultation Villach/Oesterreich, 2-6. November 1972, Arbeitspapier Nr. 4.4. For somewhat related thoughts in topic and content, cf. "ECUMENISM ON TRIAL by Won Yong JI," LWF INFORMATION, Release No. 15/70, Geneva, 19 March 1970 (5 pp.), which is an evaluation of a study conference sponsored by the Lutheran Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France, on "The Future of Ecumenism."

For a while the KLM also gave modest help to a Seoul-area ragpickers' project. In May 1962, the Metropolitan Police of Seoul began a program for taking care of the physical and spiritual needs of some 1,300 ragpickers who were living in the metropolitan area under the city's eleven police stations. The program was under the leadership of a Christian police officer, Jae-Kook KIM, who approached on June 18 some Christian leaders for assistance in the educational and moral guidance of the ragpickers. With encouragement and some financial support from the KLM, I served for a few years as the director of programing for this project which used the name "Workers' Rehabilitation Corps."<sup>[6]</sup>

This ministry of mercy and Christian service was related to a developing emphasis on direct evangelistic outreach and lay training through an organized program centered in downtown Seoul. Furthermore, it was a social welfare ministry aimed at sensitizing local groups of Christians to become active witnesses through service to people in need. (See *LCMS Convention Workbook*, 1967, p. 26)

From January to June, 1976, Mr. Abner B. Batalden, a former Lutheran World Relief representative and Program Director of KCWS (1963-1966), returned to Korea at the invitation of the LCK to make a study on "The Social Ministry of the Lutheran Church in Korea: Evaluation and Proposals." In this 49-page, thorough investigation of the situation and needs, he made a number of valuable suggestions to the LCK for consideration.

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[5] See "The History of the Development of the Diakonia in Korea," prepared by Deacon Rekkebo and his committee in Nov. 1966; KLM Rambling Record of Nov. 10, 1969, pp. 1-4; Coates' Study (March 1971), pp. 32f.; KLM Minutes 65-35 (3pp.).

[6] See KLM Minutes, 62-34, 63-14, 63-19, 63-25. Also see Mr. KIM's 60th birthday 'Festschrift,' 1985.

#### 4. The *New Life* Monthly

Among the publications of the KLM was the monthly magazine, *New Life*, which began in 1961. This project was initiated with an evangelistic outreach motif. It carried editorials, Christian news items, Biblical studies, and short stories relating the Christian faith to contemporary life. It continued for 19 years, publishing a total of 203 issues in succession. The magazine was discontinued in 1979, in part due to staffing and financial limitations; however, it could also be said that its original objectives had been achieved. *New Life* began as a very small publication with only 25 pages, but its aspiration was high. Soon its size had grown to 100 pages, including short articles of current relevance, commentaries on the current issues in Korean society and in the church, and popular literary writings such as poems, novels, and travelogues. The magazine provided a forum for young writers to test their skills. Many people participated in producing this publication and were trained by it during those years. Copies were sold through subscriptions and in bookstores throughout the country. For a time its monthly circulation reached as high as 6,000. For several years, the Republic of Korea Army Chief of Chaplains office purchased about 1,500 copies per month for distribution among the Korean military personnel.

A news release in Dec. 14, 1966 reported:<sup>[7]</sup>

Korean troops stationed in South Viet Nam will receive 1,000 copies of the December 1966 issue of *New Life*, the magazine of the Korea Lutheran Mission, which was recently presented to the

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[7] A similar account was made later in a report with this remark: "... a rare instance of a Christian journal's entering into an official contract to supply the needs of the armed forces [of the Republic of Korea] ... " *The Christian Century*, June 12, 1968, p. 797.

Chief of Chaplains of the Ministry of Defense, the Republic of Korea, for distribution at Christmas.

On receiving the magazines, Rev. Pyung-Jik CHO, civilian Chief of Chaplains, expressed his appreciation to the Korea Lutheran Mission for its support of the 339 Christian chaplains serving the Armed Forces of the Republic of Korea... Twenty-five chaplains presently minister to the 45,000 R.O.K. troops in Viet Nam.

*New Life* was originally designed for ordinary people, either Christians or non-Christian. For a number of years it was the only publication of its kind in Korea, even though there were, of course, a number of denominational organs of various types. In the course of time, however, almost every denomination began to publish a similar magazine and several interdenominational publications also appeared. Some of these publications followed the style of editing, format, and content of *New Life*. It was certainly a privilege for this modest Lutheran journal to assume such a "teaching" role. For this venture two chief staff members rendered their faithful service in two different times, namely: In-Bong IM and Kyung-Bae LEE. I acted as the editor and a writer. In due course, the LCK may undertake a similar but different publication in order to meet the new needs of the new generation of Korea both within and without the church.

## Chapter VI

### Mass Media and Ministry

#### 1. The International Lutheran Hour and Korea

Lutheran interest in Korea developed only gradually following the end of World War II. It seems that the Lutheran churches of the world had not paid much attention to Korea until then. In the first place Korea was little known to the world before that time. Furthermore, various Protestant denominations, as well as the Roman Catholics, had long been engaged in work there with considerable success. For these reasons, Lutheran mission strategists seem to have felt no urgency to start a new work in Korea.

The first expression of Lutheran mission interest in Korea after World War II may well have been by the International Lutheran Hour. This came about some time in 1948, after the Republic of Korea was formally established in the southern part of the peninsula on August 15 of that year. The International Lutheran Hour requested Mr. Eugene (Gene) Bernald, Sr., then president of the Pan American Broadcasting Service in New York, to approach the Korean diplomatic delegation in the United States regarding the possibility of broadcasting the Lutheran Hour in Korea.

Mr. Bernald had had close connections with the Korean government, especially during Syngman Rhee's regime. For a time he was the chairman of the Broadcasting Committee of the American-Korean Foundation in the USA. At the time of this writing Mr. Bernald was unable to respond to my request for further information, due to his advanced age and failing memory.



However, Mrs. Bernald has kindly shared with me some helpful information from her recollection. According to her, Mr. Bernald was associated with the International Lutheran Hour as early as 1938 by the encouragement and invitation of Dr. Walter A. Maier. Mrs. Mary (Gene) Bernald wrote me on October 24, 1986:

I do know how proud Gene was in opening up Korea for the Lutheran Hour, the number of trips he took there where he met many of the most prominent Koreans and eventually Dr. Syngman Rhee [the first President of the Republic of Korea] who was kind enough to visit us and give the children a "history" lesson on Korea, which made them all knowing in calling the country Tai-Han. This to the mystification of the school elders who were sure they were talking about Taiwan.

After his exile and while he was living in Hawaii, Dr. Rhee visited us a few times and I recall how he and Gene discussed the opening of a religious broadcasting station in Korea in which a Dr. DeCamp (?) was also involved. Apparently both considered this a great feat — and of course without Dr. Rhee's influence, it could not have taken place. As one of Gene's fond expressions, by "hook or by crook" he was determined that nothing would stop the Lutheran Hour from broadcasting. . .

In November-December, 1953, Dr. Eugene R. Bertermann of the International Lutheran Hour office in St. Louis made a trip to the Far East including South Korea.<sup>[1]</sup> At that time he met Dr. Hong-Ki KARL, then the Director of Communications of the Republic of Korea, and received a cordial welcome and assurance from him that he would render whatever assistance he could to air the Lutheran Hour program over the government radio network in Korea. At that time there was no private radio station in Korea. The International Lutheran Hour, in the meantime, had provided sets of music records, about \$ 7,000 worth, to the national Korean

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[1] See *The Lutheran Layman*, Nov, 1, 1953, p. 6; Jan. 1, 1954, pp. 9, 10; Feb. 1, 1954, pp. 1, 5, 11.

Broadcasting Service (KBS) in Seoul.

It is particularly noteworthy that Dr. Syngman Rhee, the president of the Republic of Korea at that time, sent a special "greeting" to the 37th National Convention of the LLL in Detroit, Michigan, June 27-30, 1954.<sup>[2]</sup>

Greetings to the Lutheran Laymen's League Convention. I wish I could be with you in person in Detroit, but the events of history dictate otherwise.

I am happy that your great nonsectarian broadcast, the International Lutheran Hour, has come to Korea. Surely the pure Gospel and the life of Christ heard on this broadcast will assist Koreans to rebuild a war-torn country and make our people one again. Like the International

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- [2] The LLL Minutes of the 37th Annual Convention, Detroit, Michigan, June 27-30, 1954, pp. 51, 57. Also see KLM Minutes, Nov. 1959, p. 23.

A note of interest related to the conference: On behalf of the International Lutheran Hour, Mr. Goerss, an advisor to the Ministry of Communications and interested in securing air time for the Lutheran Hour over the national station, stated that in 1954 President Syngman Rhee personally wrote the LLL and invited the "mighty Gospel Voice" to commence operations in Korea. Unfortunately men under Dr. Rhee were unaware of this personal interest in the Lutheran Hour. Since negotiations in Korea always stop short of the President, Mr. Goerss advised that LLL representatives in New York make an official request through the Korean delegation to the United Nations. This approach would bring about best results. Mr. Goerss also related that the LLL, in lieu of promises from officials in Korea that programming on government networks would be facilitated, contributed \$7,000 worth of records to the Korean National Broadcasting System.

It was an unusual thing for a head of a state to send such "Greetings" to an organization of a Christian denomination. On the other hand, it is a deep puzzlement for me that the words of greetings from President Syngman Rhee of Korea never appeared in the official publications of the LLL like *The Lutheran Layman*. I could not find any evidence of it. Were it intentional for some unrevealable reasons, I could understand it. If it was oversight on the part of the responsible staff, on the other hand, it would be an inexcusable mistake.

Lutheran Hour — “Bringing Christ to the Nations” — refuses to compromise with the forces of evil, the Republic of Korea refuses to compromise with the forces of tyranny.

Your heartwarming radio broadcast is a symbol to all who would follow the righteous path and the word of Christ; consequently another parallel can be drawn, for the Republic of Korea is a symbol to democratic forces everywhere that the rights of the individual are inviolate. Need more be shown to prove our common ground? I think not.

In coming to Korea with your world renowned broadcast, you come as brothers, not as conquerors. You come with an open hand extended to aid us, not with a clenched fist holding a weapon meaning to harm us. Would that all men carried a Bible instead of the sword. However, since the time has not arrived that all men show humanity to men, it is fitting and necessary that organizations such as the Lutheran Laymen's League continue the good fight to reach the souls and hearts of men. The democratic forces of the world must have allies in many camps other than the military and political. The first of these are those who carry the word of God in their hearts and on their lips. These are the greatest allies with the greatest strength. Our prayers are with you in your 1954 convention. We trust and pray that God, in His infinite wisdom, opens new paths to you that all mankind will benefit. Do not forget us in Korea, for we shall not forget you. Before both of us lies a long hard road with no down hill grades; but our fight is just, our cause is worthy — we shall both emerge victorious. [Syngman Rhee]

It is no wonder that the Korean government expressed its interest in Lutheran work in Korea during the visits of Dr. E. Bertermann and Dr. O. H. Schmidt in 1954 (at different times), either through radio ministry or mission in general (cf. Ch. III, 4). A frequently quoted remark of Dr. Hong-Ki KARL stated:

We hear that the Lutherans are the largest Protestant Church in the world, but there isn't a single Lutheran missionary in Korea. What have you Lutherans got against Korea? <sup>[3]</sup>

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[3] Danker, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

In another place Dr. KARL said: "Where are the Lutheran missionaries in Korea? . . . Here in Korea godless Communism and Christianity are in direct collision; and the Lutheran Church **must** take its part in this decisive struggle..." Repeatedly he spoke of the challenge of Korea to the Lutherans.<sup>[4]</sup> Dr. KARL is a Methodist clergyman, once a professor of philosophy and theology at the Methodist Theological Seminary in Seoul. In the early years of my life, I sat in one of his stimulating classes on philosophy. During the 1950s, the Korean government officials were very enthusiastic about the participation of overseas Christians in Korea's problems, needs and struggles. An earlier Korean Ambassador to the U.S., Dr. You-Chan YANG, was quoted to have said: "The work of American missionaries is almost solely responsible for the historic friendship between Korea and the United States. . . we have remained staunch friends to this day. The reason is that your missionaries came. We the people of Korea were originally isolationists [referring to the traditional 'closed policy' of the government during the Yi dynasty]." <sup>[5]</sup>

One of the first assignments given to me in Korea was the radio ministry. Already on August 6, 1958, Dr. Herman H. Koppelman, then the Assistant Executive Secretary of the BFM/LCMS, had mentioned that it was the wish of both the BFM/LCMS and the KLM that "Dr. Ji be assigned to Lutheran Hour work."

### The Use of Radio and Television

It was a wise move of the KLM, strategically speaking, to put their finger on radio ministry at a very early stage. It was a time when there was considerable confusion caused by the schisms in

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[4] *The Lutheran Witness*, July 19, 1954, p. 13. Dr. Hong-Ki KARL was the *kongbo-chujang*, from March 6, 1953 to Feb. 16, 1955, and the *kongbo-siljang*, from Feb. 16, 1955 to July 23, 1956, of the Republic of Korea.

[5] *The Lutheran Witness*, Apr. 15, 1952, p. 13.

the church bodies and the rise of an increasing number of Christianity-related new sects in Korea. Furthermore, there was almost no program of radio ministry to speak of except for the newly established small Christian radio network CBS. The Lutherans caught the opportunity at the right time as it arrived. The KLM was a pioneer in the ministry through electronic media among the Christian churches in Korea. True, there were other programs of a religious nature, but none so well organized for regular nationwide programing as the Korea Lutheran Hour (KLH). The response of the listeners was phenomenal. This was evidenced by the extensive follow-up with the correspondence courses.

The first program of the Korea Lutheran Hour went on the air at 9:00 p.m. on November 6, 1959. The KLH programs, which are all produced locally, have been broadcast regularly nationwide since then. The initial contract was signed on Oct. 5, 1959, "using a seal and a pen" between the newly established Korea Lutheran Hour and the Christian Broadcasting System in Korea (*The Lutheran Layman*, Nov. 1, 1959, p. 1). As of this writing in 1987 some 26 local stations carry its programs on a regular weekly basis. A variety of formats have been used at various times for the programs, the dramatic format being used more than others. In fact, the KLH was the first to develop a drama format for evangelistic radio programing in Korea, according to a report by *The Christian Press* (Sept. 9, 1960, p. 4). It was a situation-drama under the general title "This is the Life" ("ikut-i insyǎng ida"), illustrating actual life episodes and problems confronted in day-to-day life situations. The objective was to give answers to problems from the gospel of Jesus Christ. Experience has shown that such a drama-program approach is particularly effective in capturing the attention and in communicating the gospel relevantly to people, many of whom have not experienced the change which Christ brings into human lives.

The transmitters over which the KLH programs were broadcast not only afforded complete coverage of the South Korean peninsula, but also reached into North Korea. Actually Lutheran Hour programs were broadcast in three different languages: Korean programs, of course; the English language Lutheran Hour (which was in operation from immediately after the Korean War); and the Russian language program beamed towards Russia and Siberia from the HLKX transmitter in Inchon. In all instances these were medium wave transmissions, not short wave.

In the course of time, the KLH received various awards and recognitions for its outstanding radio work. Responses from the listeners were also good. From the beginning it used the entire network of the Christian Broadcasting System (CBS); from March 1960 it added the Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) cultural radio network and HLKX Team Radio, sponsored by The Evangelical Alliance Mission — TEAM; and frequently the Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) government network was used also. In 1972 the KLH once received, by actual count, 421,853 cards and letters within less than two months from listeners responding to a special series of 20-minute daily Christian drama programs it sponsored over the 26-station Korean government radio network.

The Lutherans also did pioneer work in the use of television for proclaiming the Gospel. They initiated a television ministry when the first Korean language television station began to operate in the country and telecast many professionally produced religious television programs, mostly in a drama format. The first 20 programs were from the well-known Lutheran "This is the Life" television series in America, lip-synchronized into Korean. This was followed by several 'seasons' (13 programs in each season) of locally written and produced home drama format programs. During special seasons of the year, such as Christmas and Easter, specially prepared Christian programs were telecast.<sup>[6]</sup> This effective method of bringing the Gospel to a nationwide audience,

however, was limited by the increasingly high cost of television production. I directed this portion of the mass media ministry until my departure for Geneva in 1968, when Missionary Hilbert Riemer assumed the directorship. Mr. Dong-Jin KIM served as the KLH **kansa** (executive staff) for several years.

In more recent times the KLH has added some formats to its half-hour weekly religious drama. Among these are a program under the title "Crossroads of Life" with a ten-minute devotional message written by Rev. Won-Sang JI, and a fifteen-minute daily radio drama serial depicting the 200 year history of the Korean Church, both Catholic and Protestant. The two latter programs are currently continuing at the time of this writing with encouraging reception from the listeners.

In 1965 the Korea Lutheran Hour initiated an annual Christian Writers' Training Institute. It was intended to help meet one of the primary needs in effective communication of the Gospel through mass media by stimulating interest in and talent for radio and television drama writing. Later institutes have concentrated on many other areas of writing as well. The program was aimed at drawing out writing talent which could serve in the mass media ministry (cf. KLM Minutes, 65-39).

### Christian Correspondence Courses (CCC)

The Korea Lutheran Hour listeners, scattered all across the Peninsula, often responded with letters of inquiry. In order to follow up on their interest, the KLM offered "Christian Correspondence Courses." Since the initiation of this program in 1960, by 1987 a total of over 690,000 individuals from every province in South Korea had enrolled in one or more of these courses to study the basic truths of the Christian faith. More than

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[6] *KOREA CALLING*, January 1966, p. 1: "Lutheran Mission Sponsors TV Dramas," written by Rev. Hilbert W. Riemer. KLM Minutes 63-3.



185,000 completed one or more of these courses. The program is offered in a primary course, an advanced course, and two courses in Korean braille for the blind.<sup>[7]</sup> Even today, new enrollee requests continue to come in at an average rate of more than 50 per day. A few dedicated staff members working in this department handle large amounts of incoming and outgoing mail every day in connection with this program.<sup>[8]</sup>

The people who enroll in the correspondence courses are scattered all over the country, in cities like Seoul and Pusan and in virtually every town and village. They come from all walks of life, and from all kinds of backgrounds. However, the CCC enrollment records show that the majority of the enrollees are in their teens and early twenties — youth with an interest in learning and with openness toward religion. Also, early CCC surveys showed that roughly half of the enrollees were in some way connected with a Christian church, either as a member or an inquirer; their CCC study served to encourage and strengthen them on their road of faith. As many as twenty-five percent of the basic course graduates would express interest in further instruction or even inquire about baptism. The CCC would respond by introducing them to the advanced course, and also encourage them to seek out a Christian church in their area. The congregations of the LCK have used various methods to make contact with interested CCC graduates in their areas. In more than one instance, CCC students have formed the nucleus for a new Lutheran mission congregation. There was even an instance when a Methodist congregation in Seoul, celebrating their tenth

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[7] For the braille program, cf. KLM Minutes: page 15 of 1959; Sept. 14, 1960; Feb. 1, March 13, Sept. 25, 1961; May 21, 1962; Resolution 62-12; a Report in June 1962.

[8] *KOREA CALLING*, Feb. 1964, pp 3-4: "Correspondence Course in Christianity—Seeking the Lost Sheep," written by Rev. Maynard Dorow.



anniversary, came to the Lutheran Hour and CCC to express their thanks — because their church had started with a group of young people who gathered to listen to the Lutheran Hour and to study the CCC together.

While it is impossible to measure in statistical terms the effectiveness of the CCC, the “tips of the iceberg” described above document the CCC role in communicating the gospel of Christ. The record also demonstrates the valid role of CCC as part of the mass media “A-approach” as well as its contribution to the “B-approach” of building up the Lutheran church (see above, Chap. IV. 3). For this department of Correspondence Courses, Won-Sang JI, Kyung-Bae LEE and Tae-Ryong CHO served as responsible persons for different lengths of time together with their faithful staff.

### Evaluation and Comment on the Lutheran Hour

As we look back on the electronic media ministry, we may note the following three significant points:

1) The Lutheran Hour played a very timely role in enabling the KLM to make an early and impressive start in the field of radio ministry. The first year of the KLM was crucial, I felt, for establishing its image and setting directions. However, during the early part of 1959 there were lengthy discussions in the KLM on “indigenous principle” and related matters that slowed the pace of decision-making and postponed realistic action.<sup>[9]</sup> In this

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[9] Cf. the KLM Minutes of January 5, 12, 19 and 26, 1959, where four successive meetings were taken up with the discussion of “indigenous principle” in relation to the question of renting a room at the Seoul YMCA for starting an information class on Lutheranism. I was more than ready to begin concrete action, while the missionaries may not have felt the same urgency as they were engrossed in learning the Korean language. In any case, the long discussion of matters that often seemed to be rather minor left me feeling frustrated and exhausted.

context the readiness of the Lutheran Hour to move ahead was gratifying to me. In response to initiatives by the KLM, the International Lutheran Hour, which is sponsored by the Lutheran Laymen's League of the LCMS, made early commitments to establishing a branch office in Korea and to producing local programs. Thus it was the Lutheran Hour radio program that provided the "opening wedge" for the Lutheran outreach in Korea.

I appreciated the confidence which the International Lutheran Hour gave to me, the KLH manager. In my estimation there were high caliber leaders in the Lutheran Hour headquarters in St. Louis at that time who demonstrated imaginative thinking and foresight. I was especially impressed by Rev. Thomas Spitz, Jr., then the director of the International Lutheran Hour, for his gentlemanly way of treating me and for his efficient handling of the matters related to the KLH.

2) The effectiveness of the Lutheran use of mass media was due in part to its well-balanced coordination, namely, the coordinated use of radio, television, printed media and pastoral ministry. Programs used in radio, for example, were also utilized in printed form as pamphlets or books; these printed materials were then also used by pastors; radio listeners were followed up by church workers, etc. Without such coordination much effort and resources could easily have been wasted. A number of Lutheran missions and churches in Asia have experienced considerable pain due to the lack of cooperation between the church body (or local congregations) and the Lutheran Hour. Once I commented in retrospect: "The thing which made me most happy during those years of my work with the Korea Lutheran Hour was the outstanding rapport with the Korea Lutheran Mission. The KLH and the KLM saw each other's place and importance, and they respected and honored the other party's role and work. They were in a good partnership." My association with the Lutheran Hour

and Lutheran Laymen's League is an unforgettable portion of my life.

3) The Lutheran Hour and the Correspondence Courses were proud feathers in the KLM and LCK cap for many years. For a long time, the Korea Lutheran Hour was one of the top religious radio programs to be heard in Korea. Already in the early period, it received first place recognition among all thirteen of the religious programs being broadcast at the time. According to Rev. Paul Bartling, then the chairman of KLM, "The strength of the KLH radio program is that it is a purely and uniquely Korean program through and through. The stories are written in Korean by a Korean script writer according to a Korean thought pattern and in a native Korean setting so that the Gospel can be communicated effectively to the Korean listening audience. The director and the producer and the voice actors and actresses and the facilities at which these programs are produced are all 'of the native soil,' which is how the word 'indigenous' is translated into the Korean language." (August 1965)

The Korea Lutheran Hour remembers with gratitude Mr. Tae-Ik CHOO, the first KLH script writer who began in 1959. He made many notable contributions to the field of Christian drama in Korea. Born in 1918 near Pyongyang, the present capital of communist North Korea, Mr. Choo became a Christian when he was 20 years old. For two years he attended a Presbyterian Seminary in the city of Pyongyang. In 1947 Mr. Choo, together with his family, fled from communist North Korea to the south where he pursued a career in writing. In 1963 he received the national "Broadcasting-Cultural Prize" from the Ministry of Public Information of the Republic of Korea. Another distinction came to him in the same year with the feature length movie entitled "Also the Dandelion Blooms in Spring" which was based upon his radio dramas. Once he commented on his close association with the KLH as its script writer: "I have always felt, and continue to feel,

my inadequacy to convey the Christian message through the medium of drama, but God has helped me throughout the years." In taking note of Mr. Choo's key role in writing scripts for the KLH during the early years, I observed: "The relationship between Mr. Choo and myself through the years has always been the finest, deeply fraternal and collegial. Mr. Choo is a fine Christian gentleman with whom I could work with joy and ease, a man of many gifts. He has also been abundantly blessed both with a sense of humility and with a sense of humor." Mr. Choo died on February 24, 1978, leaving his wife and six children. One of his sons, Dae-Bum CHOO, and his wife are teachers and active members of a Lutheran congregation in Seoul.

An additional compliment was given the KLH when its manager was appointed to the Committee on Ethics for Broadcasting in the Republic of Korea, equivalent to the Federal Communications Commission in the United States. This committee appointed me on January 31, 1967, as the representative from the religious groups in Korea. It was made up of ten persons recognized as outstanding leaders in their fields. The fields represented were the press, the legal profession, educators, musicians, businessmen, the entertainment world, the literary profession, financial world, women's groups, and the religions of Korea. In an independent, advisory capacity to both the Ministry of Public Information of the Republic of Korea and the radio and television broadcasters of Korea, the committee usually met once a month to consider and act on cases of ethical concern which had been reported by its monitors throughout the country. There were six radio networks and two television broadcasting systems in Korea. The government radio network was the largest with 13 stations. (taken from a news release, Feb. 6, 1967)

To sum up, the Lutheran Hour in Korea brought, first of all, a focal point for coordinated action within the Lutheran work which was of vital importance. Secondly, its programs have been highly

effective, reflecting their quality and the conducive atmosphere for such programs. Finally, it has brought much encouragement and recognition to the Lutheran endeavors in Korea, then and now.

At the celebration of the 1000th program of the "Crossroads of Life" series of the Korean Lutheran Hour on September 12, 1985, the president of the Christian Broadcasting Service in Korea, Rev. Kwan-Suk KIM, remarked in his congratulatory message: "The Korea Lutheran Hour has been a pioneer of mass communication evangelism and missions in Korea by assuming a leadership role in the field. The importance of the radio ministry is still great in our country and it can hardly be overemphasized."

This may be an appropriate place to make a comment on the Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL) and its International Lutheran Hour from my personal involvement and experiences with them. The LLL, organized on June 22, 1917 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as an auxiliary organization of the LCMS, has indeed aided the church body in word and deed with substantial amounts of money, new ideas and fresh incentives for God's mission to the world. Its manifold programs and projects in various areas of service at home and abroad in the past seven decades are widely recognized. As an exemplary Christian lay movement within American Lutheranism, the LLL has demonstrated the true meaning of the Reformation principle of the "universal priesthood of all believers" in a very real way. The case of the Korea Lutheran Hour is just one demonstration of the LLL's many worthy ventures for the Lord.

## **2. Communication through the Printed Word**

Another area of communications which received early attention by the KLM was the print medium. The KLM's involvement in this area of ministry started with the practical purpose of producing materials for its evangelistic and educational programs. On August

11, 1959, "Concordia-Sa," the publishing arm of the KLM, was established under the Publication Law of the Republic of Korea and registered as such (Reg. No. 2-23). Since then, it has published a variety of materials: tracts and pamphlets, booklets, books of practical and academic nature, educational materials such as the correspondence courses, Bible study materials, and regular periodicals. In a country with a high literacy rate and a vast reading population, the printed word receives a natural emphasis in almost all walks of life.

In all publications the ultimate objective has been the same, that is, the gospel witness through the print medium of communication. From the very outset special emphasis was given to literature which supported and enhanced the gospel witness to the people in Korea. As seen from the record of distribution and sales, there was an encouraging level of acceptance and demand for the books produced by Concordia-Sa.

Concordia-Sa has produced all the publications related to the Bethel Series Bible Study program in Korea since 1974, the correspondence course materials including the braille materials for the blind since 1960, as well as the current 12-volume Korean Edition of *Luther's Works*. Concordia-Sa also published the *New Life* monthly for 19 years and the *Luther Study* quarterly for three years. Currently, it produces about eight new books each year with primary emphasis on Biblical studies as well as parish education materials, and a small quarterly "Lutheran Church NEWS." According to a report in 1985, Concordia-Sa had so far published some 110 items under the book category, not including the educational materials for the Bethel Series Bible Study Program. From the very beginning Concordia-Sa stressed the following points: 1) To do a quality job in all publications. Consequently, the meticulous attention which was given to all aspects of the publishing process contributed to its good reputation. 2) To print materials whose content was to be Christian in nature in order to

edify the life of the people, religiously and ethically, that is, **kidokkyo juk kyoyangmul**. The gospel witness motif was to be present in all deliberations. 3) To produce materials on Luther and the 16th century Reformation. A good many of the published materials have a specific Lutheran emphasis in their content and theology. Their chief aim is to make an addition to Korean Protestantism, not a denominational promotion.

The materials printed by the Lutherans in Korea in general fall into the following categories: 1) Those introducing Lutheranism: the materials appearing during the early days introduced the Lutheran church to the Korean public. The first two tracts, for example, were: "The Lutheran Church and the Korean Mission" (KLM Tract No. 1) and "What is the Lutheran Church?" (KLM Tract No. 2) There was heavy demand during 1958 and 1959 from newspapers and journals of both religious and secular nature asking me to write about the history and the nature and the work of the Lutherans in the world, as well as about Luther and his Reformation movement in the 16th century.<sup>[10]</sup> 2) The second category of materials was Lutheran confessional in nature. On April 30, 1960, the Korean edition of *Luthers' Small Catechism with Explanation* (the "blue Catechism") was for the first time

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[10]The Lutheran material produced in those days received encouraging reception and sales in Seoul and other cities. An incident of interest was reported to the KLM conference. An anonymous contributor submitted a series of eight consecutive releases concerning the Reformation of Martin Luther to a leading provincial newspaper in Chulla Puk-do, a province in the southern part of the Republic of Korea. The articles were signed, "By a housewife." These articles created such interest that a Catholic priest printed an answer in refutation. Attracted by the interest created by these articles, KLM requested copies of the newspaper articles. Other than typographical errors and the misprint of German names, the articles were verbatim excerpts from Won-Yong Ji's recently published Reformation booklet. A written apology was received by Ji from the plagiarist "housewife." (KLM Minutes, page 26 [December] 1959)



published by Concordia-Sa. Soon after, a translation copy of F. E. Mayer's "The Lutheran Church" from his *The Religious Bodies in America* was published under the Korean title *Lutheran Theology*. Then the *Augsburg Confession* in the Korean language was released on June 25, 1965, the 15th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War. After the publication of *Luther's Small Catechism* in 1960, this was the second of the Lutheran confessional writings published by Concordia-Sa in the Korean language in addition to the three ecumenical creeds. In the Korean edition of the *Augsburg Confession*, an introductory section of five pages sets the historical stage of the 1500s for the appearance of this Lutheran Manifesto. In regard to the publication of this key confession of the Lutheran Church, as translator I commented (as reported in a news release in July 1965): "Among all the works which I have translated into the Korean language, this is the one which makes my heart most glad." From the point of view of confessional content, contribution to the Church, and theological purpose, I felt that the publication of the *Augsburg Confession* was a "golden opportunity to share with my countrypeople God's answer for the most searching questions and deepest needs of men and women." In this second category of Lutheran confessional literature, especially significant has also been the publication on June 25, 1988, of the Korean language translation of the entire *Book of Concord*. 3) It is readily understandable that the KLM already in its early years gave attention to Luther and his thoughts. First of all, a number of Luther's own writings, such as his Catechisms, "*Freedom of the Christian*," his disputational theses and part of his "*Table Talk*" (published by CLS-K) were translated and published and sold well. Furthermore, books like *The Life of Martin Luther*, *Luther's Thought*, *Luther and the Reformation*, authored by myself, can be mentioned. 4) The fourth category is the publication of generally Christian material, either authored or translated. Under this category, many Biblical



materials have been published.

On numerous occasions the work of Concordia-Sa received special recognition in the form of best-sellers or other acclaims. In 1962, out of "the 205 books selected by Korea's Ministry of Education for the September 1962 International Publication Exhibit at Frankfurt, Germany, only three were Christian titles, and two were Concordia-Sa publications: F. E. Mayer's *Lutheran Theology* and Ji's *Luther's Thought—Theology and Education* (*The Lutheran Witness*, Oct. 16, 1962).

In fall of 1964, the "Outstanding Author Award" of the Christian Literature Society for the three-year period of 1961-1963 of Korea was awarded for the aforementioned Concordia-Sa publication, *Luther's Thought*.

The Ministry of Education of Korea together with the Association of Publishers selected 178 book titles to be displayed at the Fifth International Fair of Publications which was held in Tokyo from October 16-22, 1966. Among those chosen were four Christian books including one Roman Catholic publication. The book *Luther and the Reformation* written by me and published in 1965 by Concordia-Sa was again one of the four selected Christian titles.

In the mid-1970s the translation of portions of the *Talmud*, published by Concordia-Sa, was on the best-seller list for several months.

During this time, I served as the Korea correspondent of *The Christian Century* in the United States for two years until I had to resign due to my move to Geneva in 1968. This "Korea" column played a helpful role in relating Korea to world Christendom.

Thus, the publishing unit of the KLM demonstrated the strength and significance of the print medium of communication in society, and subsequently became an indispensable arm of the Lutheran Church in Korea. Among the Korean staff for this phase of work, the names Kyung-Bae LEE and Han-Gook BAI should be mentioned.

## Chapter VII

### Reflections on the Role of the Missionary

The unique make-up of the KLM led to its giving an unusual amount of attention to the role of the missionary in Korea. The KLM, in turn, was able to stimulate a similar interest among the church leaders and missionaries in general. By the 1960s there were already thousands of churches all over Korea, thousands of national pastors and evangelists, and hundreds of expatriate missionaries from various countries in the West. Under such circumstances, three expatriate missionaries and one Korean national clergy were trying to do something meaningful as a Lutheran team. In size they were indeed a drop in a bucket of water. Naturally, they were eagerly searching for their role in Korea. Even among the foreign missionaries of long established churches, the role of the missionary was not clearly defined. It was, therefore, a timely subject. The discussion of this subject is an essential part of the history of the KLM, for the KLM was seriously endeavoring to discover its true task in the changing context of Korea.

Due to my long association with the West and the Western missionaries shoulder to shoulder, the subject of the missionary's role in a foreign land became one of my personal interest areas.<sup>[1]</sup>

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[1] A few samples of my study are: an extensive survey on the role of the missionary in Korea which I conducted in 1967; numerous lectures on the same subject in the same year; similar deliberation in Papua New Guinea in 1977 at the request of the *Missionswerk* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany; several published articles; an unpublished manuscript in 1967; and my book *Meines Bruders Hüter* (1979).

No other topic, I still feel, needs so much serious attention and ongoing constant review as the role of the missionary. There can be no one study of the missionary's role applicable for all times. Each generation may define it somewhat differently, because needs and issues are constantly changing. This section of the book represents some of my personal thoughts.<sup>[2]</sup>

Expatriate missionaries today seem to be puzzling over their role in the increasingly indigenized environment of the "mission field." The role of the missionary is no longer an academic question nor a topic for leisurely discussion. In the minds of many missionaries, especially the evangelistic missionary, there is serious anguish. The WHEATON DECLARATION<sup>[3]</sup> under "Mission — and Foreign Missions" stated already two decades ago: "In this day of unprecedented missionary activity urgent questions are being asked. What is the role of the missionary? What is his relation to the national church? . . . we encourage church and mission leaders to define the role and to enlarge the vision of those called to pastoral or missionary service." From a survey which I conducted in 1967 in Korea, it was especially noticeable that missionaries were more seriously concerned about their role than were the national church leaders. Missionary Roy Shearer noted that his Korean associates seem to care little about the role of the missionary. One national friend of his said, "Well, I hadn't thought what a missionary's role ought to be."

Here we cannot deal with specific areas of assignment or work delegated to each missionary. One should expect a different answer for each individual case, whether it be an evangelistic,

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[2] The reader may readily observe a change of pace, from narrative to more essay style. Parts of this section are taken from my earlier article on the subject, "The Role of the Missionary Today," published in the *KOREA JOURNAL* of Korea UNESCO, January 1967, pp. 20-23, 33.

[3] The WHEATON DECLARATION was originated in Wheaton, Illinois, in April, 1966 by the Evangelicals.

medical, educational or other type of worker. Each case must be treated individually. For this reason it is more relevant to consider some of the facets of the missionary's role in general, as I have done in the following pages.

1) The missionary is a spokesman for God and for people

The missionary is to help the local national people with whom he is called to serve. Naturally he is expected to stand for their cause and needs, for their happiness and welfare, as well as for their griefs and problems. The world renowned missionary E. Stanley Jones wrote several decades ago in his book *Christ on the Indian Road* that each missionary should feel himself an "adopted son of India." The missionary to Korea in that regard is no exception. He must feel that Korea's problems are his problems, Korea's needs his needs. The missionary is neither a spectator nor a visitor nor a curiosity-seeker. As much identification as possible with the people is essential. On the other hand no missionary can completely identify with the local national. The missionary can never be free from "foreignness," nor can he become a national, nor is it necessary to become nationalized. He has his own unique way of witnessing as an expatriate worker.

A missionary can be a better public relations agent for the land where he works to his home country than his local national counterparts. Generally speaking the people in the West trust their own missionary representatives. The missionary therefore is in a good position to interpret the church of the field to the church at home, to share his experience in the field in such a way as to edify the church at home, and to relate the meaning of missions in terms of sharing between churches. This aspect of support and cooperation on the part of the missionary is still indispensable.

The nationals expect the missionary to be courageous for their cause. According to D. T. Niles, the "missionary repeats in human terms the incarnation" which is the essence of God's way with man. God Himself came to the world, hungered, was stripped

naked on a cross, and then became our bread and our joy. Whenever a crucial issue arises which affects the welfare of the people and local national colleagues, the missionary ought to have the courage and empathy to speak up for them in their stead, instead of merely criticizing. A missionary who can suffer with the people can correct them whenever necessary, and also share their joy. Indeed, he who suffers most has most to give; he who suffers with them receives respect.

2) The missionary is a co-worker

The missionary is a co-worker who works with his local national colleagues. He is often referred to nowadays as a “fraternal worker” or a “partner” to distinguish him from earlier supervisory missionaries. The missionary is neither the driver nor a back-seat driver. He is a co-driver, for he is a partner with his national colleague having the same license from the same Lord. He has similar credentials and, possibly, similar limitations as those of his national co-worker. The welfare of one affects that of the other. The proper relationship between missionaries and nationals (and between national churches and overseas missions) is vitally important for fulfilling the mission of the Church to evangelize the world. In order to achieve this relationship a “cooperative partnership” with mutual respect and love is needed. An illustration may be made with a dam. To hold a great amount of forceful water (challenges of the times) in a reservoir, the dam must be strong. Large stones (missionary and national leaders), small stones and sand (people), steel posts (principles and policies) and cement (love, respect, patience, concern, fortitude, etc.) — all are essential and basic elements. Each plays a unique role. All can find their meaningful role when they work hand in hand. The missionary needs the cooperation of his local national colleague for discovering his real role.

3) The missionary is a willing consultant

One cannot be an ideal consultant and counselor without

winning the good will of the people. In policy-making and planning, the missionary should be a ready consultant to the national church by sharing his insight, knowledge, experience and resources. Plans must be suitable to the local situation. In this area, the worst enemy is the master-complex or the employer-complex of missionaries and the employee-complex of nationals. The Christian concept of vocation must be fully understood by both. Neither is master. Jesus Christ is the only Master and the Employer who sends out His husbandmen to work in His vineyard.

4) The missionary is expected to encounter unbelief

Missionaries today seem to be less courageous and daring than their predecessors in confronting the secular world and encountering unbelief. Often their minds are too obviously attached to their homeland where their loved ones, home church and security are left. With such flimsy armor one can hardly fight the fiery darts of the enemy. Many pioneer missionaries even risked their lives in giving a gospel witness to non-Christians. They stood on the front line of the encounter between the gospel and the world. "The missionary should not try to work in his room sitting on a comfortable seat," the noted Japanese Lutheran theologian Chitose Kishi once remarked, "but should go out and work there in the world." Not many missionaries are directly involved in evangelistic work. Frequently their work lacks a sense of urgency. The missionary enterprise by its very nature must be constantly on the edge of the encounter with the non-Christian and with non-Christian culture. Christian theology and faith-expression have to be relevant, vibrant, and missionary in their fervor.

The missionary nowadays, however, can seldom be an effective rifleman in the front line. He is at most an artilleryman, a bombardier, an ammunition supplier — the "man behind the man behind the gun." He may best be involved in evangelism as an

idea-man, as a goad, as a supplier of tools, and perhaps as a limited participant so that he might remain alert to the real problems involved. Only when circumstances so demand will the missionary also take up a rifle and stand in the firing line of the mission. In different capacities missionaries and national workers encounter unbelief, secularism, indifference and all types of atheism and materialism. The gospel of Jesus Christ is indeed supra-national and supra-cultural, but the tasks and functions of the national and expatriate workers vary and their effectiveness cannot be the same.<sup>[4]</sup>

There are two classic examples of missionaries in the history of the church which can be good models for us as we reflect on the missionary role. One was the apostle Paul; the other, Martin Luther.

The apostle Paul without question was the first missionary par excellence, cross-cultural in character, a special messenger of the gospel to the Graeco-Roman world. To begin with, Paul was a one-man theological seminary and a one-man mission director-and-missionary. He inspired countless men and women to give their lives gladly for the same cause which Paul himself upheld. His method of missions has been frequently cited as **the** method for all. Many writings, like the classic volume by Roland Allen (1869-1947), *Missionary Methods, St. Paul's or Ours*, 1912, depict Paul as the prototype for all missionaries to come.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was another missionary, not of the traditional and romantic mold but representing a unique and

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[4] The four points mentioned here may seem to some readers to be too obvious and overly didactic. Some of these obvious points, I so learned in my life, are frequently neglected; no matter how distasteful the comments may at times be, they are nevertheless true; and, furthermore, these ideas have been "tested out" in the context of Korea in general and the KLM in specific. Naturally, the present writer is responsible for these comments.



genuine sense of the term "mission."<sup>[5]</sup> Luther was an enlightened missionary for his time — the tail end of the Middle Ages, an era of much self-indulgence and apathy. The "church" thought for people and answered for them. But Luther stimulated his generation to think for themselves, to be puzzled and perplexed, and to ask profound questions (cf. his own spiritual struggles and "Anfechtungen"). And, Luther was a fearless missionary to the church, the medieval Roman Church which he loved and respected (cf. his treatise, "*Babylonian Captivity of the Church*"). Further, Luther was a thoughtful missionary to his own people (cf. his translation of the Bible, hymns, and many writings of practical nature). He was also a courageous missionary to the world (cf. his exposition, for example, on Col. 1:23 and Mark 16:15). Luther, finally, was an insightful missionary to the self-centered "Renaissance-man," the rational man, the **homo sapiens**, the human wisdom-inspired man of the Graeco-Roman world (cf. "*De servo arbitrio*").

At a "missionary night" held April 17, 1968, at the Seoul Y. M. C. A. in commemoration of the landing of the first Protestant clergy missionaries in Korea in 1885, I presented an address on the contemporary role of the missionary. My address concluded as follows:

Missionaries are not out of a job; they have a new job. Their background and experiences, different as they are from those of most nationals, are needed for various kinds of work. In the Christian mission enterprise there is ecumenical and theological significance symbolizing universal fellowship and unity in Jesus Christ which transcends race, language, nationality and

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[5] It has been a matter of dispute whether or not Luther was mission-minded in the usual sense, e.g., Gustav A. Warneck on one side (negative) and Werner Elert (positive) on the other side. On this topic there are many helpful materials. One of the recent writings: "Was Luther a Missionary?" by Eugene W. Bunkowske, *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, April-July 1985, pp. 161-79.



background. There will be happier and more successful days in mission work provided we do not waste our energies and resources through misunderstanding and lack of communication between churches and missions, missionaries and nationals. They stand together at the frontier of the challenging world... working somewhat like the two wheels of a cart. The solution for any problem therefore is not all on one side. Because of our shortcomings and failures we are in as great need of mutual forgiveness as of mutual acceptance.<sup>[6]</sup>

A similar question can be raised today also, nearly 20 years after the above statement: Is the overseas missionary out of job? No ! Only his/her job needs redefinition. Is the missionary no longer needed ? No ! Only his/her role often needs reassessment in many places in the world. A missionary with dedication and competence, combined with the congeniality to be part of a team with fellow missionaries and the national church and its leaders, is needed very much today. The work of the real missionary can never be out of date, as long as Jesus Christ and His gospel are not out of date. Who/what is, then, a missionary?

The "missionary" is a person with special tasks:

- to meet the ugly (sinful) human with grace,
- to awaken the sluggish with patience,
- to discover the worth and vision of life in a world of negativism,
- to appreciate things "disagreeable" in culture,
- to inspire people to think on the MEANING rather than on the forms of life,
- to share with the unloveable the Christ-inspired love, for he sees the shadow of the cross over them.<sup>[7]</sup>

A true missionary participates in the life of the poor and the lost with no sense of sacrifice; gives without the pride of giving. He does all things in Christ, by his saving gospel, for God's glory, and unto the life of all people.

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[6] This was published in *The Christian Century*, June 12, 1968, p. 796.

[7] My own words, taken from my lecture notes for class.

## Chapter VIII

### Comments and Evaluation

The preceding chapters are by no means intended to be a mere catalog of events and activities of the small struggling band of Lutherans who tried to make their life meaningful and their mission tasks authentic in the peculiar situation of the Korean peninsula in the 1960s. What transpired was not sheer accident. Behind it was the working hand of the Lord. Humanly speaking, on the other hand, there were some peculiar factors which made the efforts of the KLM unique. Some of these factors were problematic in nature, others were inherent in the Korean situation. Therefore, it may be appropriate to take up a number of pertinent points as a summary evaluation of the KLM and the situation in which it was working, before moving on to the transition from KLM to LCK and further description of the work of the Lutherans in Korea. This listing below is by no means exhaustive nor comprehensive.

#### **1 . Under the Shadow of Korean Christendom**

Nature provides sunlight and shade. Shade is good for cooling off, but not for growing and strengthening. Under the shadow of a large tree, plants have a tough time growing. The Lutheran work was, from the very beginning, under the shadow of Korean Protestantism which is predominantly Reformed in theology with a Pentecostal ferment, non-liturgical, and with little emphasis on the Holy Sacraments. Almost in every village, not to mention towns and cities, one can find church steeples standing high.

Especially, the Presbyterian church has a large membership and a variety of institutions throughout the nation. Next to it are Methodist, Holiness, Salvation Army, Baptist, Assemblies of God, Anglican, Pentecostal bodies and others which came to Korea long before the Lutheran church. Through these churches a certain image of Christianity and church had been firmly fixed. Any church with the sign of "Presbyterian" or "Methodist" is immediately familiar and acceptable. Under such circumstances, "Lutheran" was very unfamiliar and strange. People, both Christians and non-Christians, often hesitated to approach a Lutheran church. In some extreme cases, Christians thought of "Lutherans" as a heretical sect. As recently as July 1985, a member of a Lutheran congregation in Taegu related to me the following experience:

The other Sunday morning on my way to our church I heard two women churchgoers passing by our church talking to each other. One said: "Say, what kind of church is that small one there?" pointing at our Lutheran church. The other lady replied, whisperingly, "Oh, you know, that is what is called *i-dan kyo-pa* (heretical denomination)!"

This sense of "strangeness" has been a reality ever since the start of the work in 1958. It has improved somewhat, but it is still there. Missionaries and nationals, especially the latter, had to struggle with this image problem in the midst of all the large Christian denominations in Korea, not infrequently with a strong minority complex. Naturally, there were also certain advantages in starting missionary work in a land like Korea, such as, the availability of the Bible in the local language, Christian hymns, and helpful Christian literature. Whether or not such advantages can offset the disadvantages for a group like the Lutherans newly entering a "Christianized land in Asia" is an interesting topic for discussion. Lutheran pastors and lay members today will have to

live and work under such circumstances for some time to come, as they uphold the Lutheran identity in a chiefly Reformed church atmosphere. The Lutheran Hour programs, literature work, Bethel Series Bible Study Program, etc., have made considerable improvement in this situation over the past years, but the problem of strangeness attached to the Lutherans is still clearly noticeable.

## **2. Dissidents**

Stories of dissidents from other denominations and church groups have been mentioned more than once in this volume. Many Christians, especially from the clergy rank, tried to get into the Lutheran fold, or claimed that they had some previous connection with Lutherans, or insisted that they were positively convinced by the teachings of Luther and Lutheranism. Most of them were aware of the international reputation of Lutheranism and of its large size, even though it was so new and small in Korea. At times, they would use all kinds of means to push through their intention by approaching the American missionaries; at other times they would try to get the attention of the Korean national leaders. At the first meetings of the adult instruction class which I conducted in the spring of 1959, for example, several clergymen of other denominations would sometimes attend. As the instruction period progressed, all of them dropped out one by one, realizing that the Lutheran way of receiving people into membership or into the clergy was not as simple and easy as they had thought. During the early years, there were many inquiries and visits by curious people and groups. Had the KLM taken in all the dissidents and inquirers into its membership without considering theological, ecclesial and missiological concerns, there might have been many more "Lutherans" by now. On the other hand, many negative consequences might have followed which the KLM certainly wanted to avoid. In scope and complexity this phenomenon was

unique to Korea. Again, this cannot be understood without understanding the church situation in Korea during the '50s and '60s (cf. Ch. II 3).

In recent years a somewhat similar situation prevails in the United States. Since the relaxation of the Immigration Law in the mid-'60s, thousands of Koreans have immigrated to America. Among them were many clergymen with no clear identity. Some were unemployed. Many more made their way to the U. S. through various routes, especially through invitations to training programs. The Koreans in the U. S. are known as the ethnic group which has more churches than any other minority group of similar size. In this situation, some have tried to gain entrance into a strong denomination, like the Lutheran, frequently it seems with ulterior motives. Such might have been the case in one district on the west coast of the United States.<sup>[1]</sup> Some of these dissidents have used all possible means to achieve their ends. To a certain extent, this situation resembles what the KLM experienced in its early years.

### **3. A Unique Feature of the KLM**

A peculiar aspect of Lutheran beginnings in Korea was the involvement of a returning Korean in the vanguard of the work. Interestingly, it is somewhat similar to the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church in Korea toward the end of the 18th century (see Chap. II. 1). In that instance a Korean became a Catholic while he was abroad, returned to his homeland and helped found the Roman Catholic Church in Korea. Similarly, a Korean, myself, also went abroad, was confirmed, trained and ordained as a Lutheran, and then returned in 1958 together with missionary colleagues to play a unique role in the founding of the Lutheran Church in

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[1] Upon the request of the Northwest District of LCMS, Rev. Paul Bartling conducted an investigation into the case of a certain Rev. KIM. See the "Confidential Rambling Notes on Seattle Visit, Dec. 16-17, 1976," 5 pp.

Korea. Thus, the KLM operated from the very beginning with the full participation of a Korean national, both in establishing the principles and in carrying out the work. It was called a "mission," but it was in reality a "church" right from the start, with called and ordained pastors, Lutheran believers and the preaching of the Word and the administering of the Holy Sacraments.

#### **4 . The Issue of "National" and "Missionary"**

Possibly nowhere in Christian missions did the question of "national" and "missionary" come up so early and so seriously as in the LCMS' venture in Korea. The BFM/LCMS had previously had some difficulties on the rather touchy question of how to handle and treat those foreign nationals who received full theological training in America and then returned to their home lands. A practical concern behind this was the question of remuneration. In numerous talks with me this subject came up in an informal manner. For this reason I knew of the problem even before the actual calling of the missionaries to Korea. To alleviate unnecessary worry, I made known my position clearly at the outset of the work. I communicated my thoughts on the issue to the officials of the BFM by saying: "Out of my own personal conviction, I would be content with the remuneration, such as salary, benefits, etc., as my Korean counterparts in my home land." That is to say, paid not on a "missionary scale" according to the U. S. standard of living, but on a "national scale" according to a Korean standard. Certainly this relieved the mission executives, who expressed their appreciation to me for that understanding. Thus there was no further question or discussion when the call ("Diploma of Vocation") was issued to me on May 23, 1957, and subsequently accepted by me on June 22. Otherwise, this could have been a serious problem which might be detrimental to our relationship. My comment on this matter:

I was of the opinion 30 years ago that if any Korean wanted to return to his homeland and work with his Korean peers, he should feel and act as one of them, not as an expatriate. As a Christian worker, he should by no means be a privileged person in his homeland. One cannot speak to his people unless he lives on their level, not on a foreign scale. . . Furthermore, the national church cannot afford three classes of workers: expatriate missionaries, national workers, Korean-American workers. . . This is still my conviction today, 30 years later.

On the other hand, it is almost amusing to read the words of the mission executive in America, offering me a salary as a "national missionary worker in Korea" in so many meticulous words. The significant word, of course, is "national" which is a good word but sometimes with a negative connotation.

As has been previously agreed, and in view of the policy of establishing an indigenous church in Korea, Dr. Ji's salary shall, in view of his advanced training, be determined by the scale paid in colleges and universities in Korea. By our information this salary varies from 60,000 hwan for instructors, to 90,000 hwan for full professors. This salary includes housing and other amenities. The beginning salary for Dr. Ji, determined by the Board, shall be 75,000 hwan per month. . . [about \$ 180 according to the exchange rate in 1957].<sup>[2]</sup>

My agreement to this condition caused some displeasure in later years among the Korean students then studying in synodical educational institutions of the LCMS in the U. S. Some of them felt

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[2] See the "Board for Missions in Foreign Countries Statement on Understanding in the case of Dr. Won Yong Ji" by Herman H. Koppelman, August 6, 1958. As a follow-up to this Statement of Understanding I wrote a letter to Missionary Maynard Dorow, dated Aug. 27, 1958, with copies to Dr. Koppelman and Rev. E. R. Drews. Then Missionary Dorow kindly responded from Korea on Sept. 8, 1958, saying that everything would be arranged in a mutually satisfactory manner. All of this correspondence had to do with my salary matter.



that this agreement might hinder their right to claim to be treated as "equals" with American missionaries. And, there seemed to be a false assumption that I was in some way blocking their return. (See the KLM Minutes, May 6, 1960, III. N. B.: JI was absent.)<sup>[3]</sup>

This issue of how to treat the "national" was a problematic subject in the LCMS overseas mission operation. In my case, as it turned out, I was a full member of the KLM Conference from the start with "the rights and privileges, responsibilities and obligations associated with such membership." The amount of my salary, quoted above, was indeed low by comparison with the American missionary's scale at that time, but it was a reasonable amount for a comparable position held by a Korean in Korea.

In all these procedures, the BFM could have handled more wisely, in my opinion, the entire matter of "national" and "missionary." At times that issue appeared to be more important than the work itself. My comment now is:

I was treated well since then. I was satisfied at being a "national worker." That was what I have been; and I am always proud of it. Nevertheless, I can never forget the distasteful and untactful handling of the matter, which sometimes appeared to be almost unchristian and racial prejudice. I was somewhat suspected by the BFM, on the one hand. By Korean peers and friends sometimes I was somehow mistaken to be getting a fat salary of a foreigner. A Korean acquaintance once came to me and deliberately asked for help out of "your missionary salary." I laughed to myself. He got only a little. . .?

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[3] Some people might ask, "What about the other gifted Koreans who were studying in the United States during those years? Why didn't they go back to serve with the Lutheran Church in the land of their birth?" That is a complicated question, very personal as well as sensitive in nature, which cannot be answered in general terms. Each case would need to be treated separately. The KLM went on record to state that "Stateside Koreans who have studied under the auspices of Concordia Theological Seminary are



## 5. Relationship between Missionaries and National Workers

Possibly nowhere among mission organizations in Korea has the day-to-day-relationship between missionaries and Korean national workers been so close as in the KLM. Out of this situation many good things resulted, including deeper understanding and mutual benefits. On the other hand, unexpected tensions also occurred, such as conflicts between missionary and local national staff. There was sometimes a direct encounter of the East and the West, so to speak, in the early years of the KLM between its chairman and myself. Out of this, fortunately, more talks and studies were made on the role of the missionary in the KLM than in other mission groups in Korea.

In the classroom, the prominent Biblical scholar, Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann, once remarked: "Consecration is no substitute for competence." Appropriate advice for all mediocre students! The reverse may also be true, especially for a missionary in a foreign land. Competence alone does not accomplish the entire job assigned to him. A Christian personality (*in-kyuk*) and dedication count. Nowadays, "how many" missionaries is not as significant as "what kind" of missionaries. This has been true all along in the Lutheran work in Korea. After some 30 years of operation, we may say: some were outstanding, others were acceptable. Fortunately, thanks to God, the KLM and the LCK over the years has had more of the missionaries in the "outstanding" category.

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welcome to return to Korea to join with the fellowship of the KLM, providing that they serve the KLM as fellow Korean nationals." Suffice it to say that in spite of the noblest intentions, a return to Korea and fulltime service with the Lutheran Church in Korea simply never materialized. See a reference to this matter in *Two Worlds Or None* authored by William J. Danker in 1964, p. 279.

## 6. "Mentalities" in Missions

Korean mentality, Anglo mentality, Germanic mentality! One may not be totally sure about putting something under one of these categories; nevertheless, there appear to be certain characteristics in the work of the Lutherans, like the Missouri Synod, with Germanic origin. Everything must be well researched, planned and organized, with no mistake and no foreseeable failure. At times, there seem to be situations of tension between God's mercy apart from man's effort on the one hand and the thorough human plan and calculation on the other hand. There must be intelligent calculation. No assumptions, no guesses are allowed. This means that the Lutherans are extremely cautious, and consequently also rather slow. Can that hold indefinitely in a place like Korea where more Anglo mentality-oriented Reformed Christian groups dominate? However, to pursue the above remarks would require a lengthy discussion.

We close this section with comments by two men outside of the KLM and the LCK. A former Presbyterian missionary and Old Testament professor in Korea wrote in 1962 in America's foremost ecumenical journal, *The Christian Century*:

### MISSOURI SYNOD EFFECTIVE:

Of all the new Christian work begun in Korea in recent years that of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is the most vigorous and probably the most successful. When the first missionaries arrived four years ago they rejected the opportunity to gather a motley group of disaffected Methodists and Presbyterians and make them Lutherans, choosing rather to undertake various constructive enterprises during the time in which they were learning the language and becoming acquainted with the country. Success of the program is due in large part to the efforts of Ji Won Yong, a native of North Korea who graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary in the U. S. and who is highly respected in

church circles. He returned to Korea in late 1958. Under his direction the Korea Lutheran Hour has been on the air since November 1959 and is at present carried on eight private stations, covering most of South Korea. The programs have met with a favorable response and have brought many inquiries.

A little less than a year after the broadcasts were launched a "Correspondence Course in Christianity" was started. To date some 38,000 persons have enrolled, and over 9,500 have completed the course. Korea is a country hungry for education and reading matter, and this course has obviously filled a great need. Graduates are encouraged to subscribe to the magazine called *New Life*, which after 12 monthly issues has 1,000 paying subscribers. In addition, a number of books, some of them translations and some written by Dr. Ji, have been published by the Korea Lutheran Publishing House and are selling well in secular book stores. Lutherans also have begun work with American servicemen and have erected a new center in Seoul for the work.<sup>[4]</sup>

A graduate student at Concordia Seminary, James Zimmerman, has upon request left the following comments after extensive research on Korea Lutheran Mission during 1984-1985:

1) The KLM was committed to an 'indigenous mission strategy.' Everything was done in the light of this strategy. Consequently, the LCK in later years seems to be more Korean (means 'indigenous') than the churches that have been established by other missions both in Korea and elsewhere. For this reason, this principle may be more preferable than the traditional method with classical signs of success, such as the number of new churches and new members, even though there can likely be some misunderstanding about this strategy from the sending church and at times with certain signs of frustration for all involved.

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[4] Keith R. Crim, "Korea," *The Christian Century*, May 2, 1962, p. 578. For an interpretation of KLM, see KLM Conference note, Jan. 4-7, 1965 (14 pp.). It is very helpful material.

2) The KLM was unique in that it avoided many common frictions between foreign missionaries and between missionaries and national workers. Most missions have at least some trouble in this area. However, KLM had remained mostly problem free until the late sixties when the "mass communication team" came.

3) KLM was also unique in the area of administration with mostly men who had 'in service training,' rather than with formal professional training, e. g., in the areas of business, finance, mass media, literature, etc.

4) Where KLM did make mistakes and where it was overcautious could be excusable considering the circumstances during its formative years. Since the indigenous strategy was a 'new' thing for the sending body, LCMS in America, a little groping around was to be expected. The insights gained by KLM should be carefully examined when similar indigenous strategy is tried again elsewhere.

5) In general, the timing of things was somewhat disadvantageous for KLM. In the 1950s there were many other events and new mission fields of LCMS that attracted attention away from KLM. For example, when KLM started, India and Japan were specially emphasized. Then, the Middle East and West Africa opened; South America became a big thing. While these fields got all the attention, KLM was almost put off in a corner. Furthermore, it appears that most of the men on the BFM came from India, New Guinea, or West Africa. As such, they seem to have supported their old friends more than the others. This kind of situation, at the end assessment, could be an additional compliment to KLM.

## **Part Three**

# **The Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK)**

## Chapter IX

### The Period of Transition

#### 1. KLM's Exposure to the International Scene

On June 6, 1968, the English daily *KOREA HERALD* and on June 5, the Korean daily *SHIN-A ILBO* reported a news release from the UPI, DPA and UNITED PRESS from Geneva, that a 43-year old Korean Lutheran clergyman had been appointed Secretary for Asia for the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in Geneva, Switzerland. The news item said:

... Dr. Ji, presently director and professor of the Lutheran Theological Academy of Korea Lutheran Mission and a guest professor of theology at Yonsei University in Seoul, . . . will take up his new appointment in Geneva in July. He is the author and translator of several books and has been active in Bible translation, Christian literature work, and in broadcasting activities . . . and the director of Korea Lutheran Hour. . .

Soon thereafter, other Korean dailies<sup>[1]</sup> and Christian newspapers made the same report. Much earlier, *The Lutheran Witness Reporter* in the U. S. (April 7, 1968) had quoted the LWF INFORMATION release regarding my appointment to that post which has significance for the churches in Asia.

It was a surprise to me and my colleagues in Korea when I was first approached by the LWF in early January 1968. I was offered an executive post responsible for Asia, which was then in the Department of World Mission of the LWF. It was unexpected because the Lutheran presence in Korea through the KLM was

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[1] *Chosun Ilbo*, July 7; *Hankook Ilbo*, July 9, 1968, etc.

little known in international Lutheran circles. Furthermore, the KLM was neither an organized church body nor a member of the international Lutheran organization, the LWF. At the time I was on a journey through Europe visiting various Lutheran churches there, immediately following a special assignment as "guest instructor and research scholar" at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in commemoration of the 450th anniversary of Luther's Reformation.

After much serious discussion and mutual consideration, the KLM gave me its blessing to accept the appointment. I accepted this new post with the conviction that this assignment might give additional strength and knowledge to me personally as well as benefit the Lutheran work in Korea, which I regarded as my life-long task. I also considered this opportunity as a unique mission challenge to the West. In addition, there was an incident in St. Louis during the year (1967) which partly contributed to the decision.<sup>[2]</sup> The deep disappointment from it somehow prompted a radical change in my life's course which in the end turned out to be good, under God's grace, for me and my work in subsequent decades. It was a strange coincidence that during my trip to Europe immediately after that unhappy experience in St. Louis, the new offer from the LWF came to me.

The Denver Synodical Convention of the LCMS in 1969 had this

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[2] My invitation as a visiting lecturer at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, in observance of the 450th anniversary of Luther's Reformation, had turned out to be a great disappointment. As a result of the host school's carelessness and oversight in preparing the semester's program, no student enrolled for my only course (H-867: "Luther and Education"), for which I had prepared ever since receiving the invitation in 1963. My feeling of hurt was expressed in a writing entitled "From Well-Village to Concordia" (26 pp.) together with a covering letter dated Dec. 19, 1967, to Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer, then the president of Concordia Seminary, and my anger was also communicated to the seminary officials in letters dated September 13 and 18, 1967.

comment(*Workbook*, p. 14): "Despite a membership of less than 500 the KLM has distinguished itself by its Lutheran witness throughout Korea and beyond. . . In 1968 Dr. Won Yong Ji of the Korea Lutheran Mission staff accepted a 3-year appointment as Asia Secretary of the LWF in Geneva."

Throughout my stay in Europe in subsequent years, I regarded myself as a "missionary to the West," a "representative" of the Lutheran Church in Korea, and a civilian ambassador of Korea. My initial commitment to the LWF for three years, in the meantime, became seven years and three months, followed by another three years in Germany. Thus, my personal involvement with the KLM for the first decade 1958-68 was linked with an interesting new chapter of work for me personally, which also provided new exposure for the KLM to the international Christian, as well as the Lutheran, world. A new decade of challenge was dawning for my work and for my relation to the Lutheran work in Korea.<sup>[3]</sup>

The KLM, and later the LCK, could more readily become known on the international scene through its "representative," the Secretary for Asia of the LWF. Certainly, it was a new step forward for the KLM to be introduced to fellow Lutherans around the world as well as to world Christendom. My decade of pilgrimage in the international theatre may someday enable me to document a personal "memoir"; however, the task in this book is to take up only some of the items related to the Lutheran Church in Korea.

Partly in response to my commitment to the Lutheran World Federation, the Lutheran Church in Korea began to give serious thought regarding its contribution to, as well as its participation in, the world Lutheran community. Subsequently the LCK joined the LWF in July 1972, at the time of **Rutu-kyo Sunkyo-hoi**, the transitional body between the KLM and the LCK. The actual role which the LCK has since then played in the international world of

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[3] Minutes of KLM, 69-88 (Nov. 8, 1969).



Lutherans will unfold further in this publication.

In subsequent years questions were raised among the partners of the LCK throughout the world regarding its membership in LWF. How could the LCK be an official member of the LWF and still remain a credible partner of the LCMS in America and of other partner churches and missions which had declined LWF membership?<sup>[4]</sup> To this critical voice the LCK has from time to time expressed its conviction on its understanding of being confessional in an "ecumenical age." LCK has tried always to maintain a Lutheran confessional stance while maintaining the dynamics of its mission task as a small member of the Christian minority in a non-Christian world. The following summary by Missionary Dorow may be helpful:

The interest of the LCK in the LWF membership stemmed from both practical and theological concerns. It was apparent that membership in the principal world body of the Lutheran churches would lend status to the fledgling LCK in the eyes of Korean government and church leaders. Further, participation in LWF programs would open up opportunities for sharing and communication with other Lutheran churches, especially those in neighboring nations along the rim of Asia where Lutherans are few and far between. But besides these more practical concerns the LCK move to join LWF was consistent with its understanding of how it could best carry out the Lutheran confessional commitment, namely, by taking every opportunity to "confess" in an open and positive manner to the faith which forms the heart of the Lutheran confession.<sup>[5]</sup>

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[4] In 1972, only two of the LCMS partner churches around the world held LWF membership, namely, those in India and Korea. However, today in Asia alone five out of seven LCMS partner churches are LWF members (India, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Hong Kong and Korea).

[5] From an address given by Dr. Maynard Dorow at St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada (cf. Documentation VIII).

## .. New National Leadership

Following my departure from Korea in 1968, the first noticeable change was in the national leadership. The Rev. Won-Sang JI, my younger brother, began to assume more responsibilities.

Won-Sang's initial contact with the Lutherans goes back a long time. As I was preparing this manuscript, an interesting episode was related to me personally by Rev. Arthur W. Meyer (an LCMS clergyman), a retired US Air Force chaplain and currently the pastor of the International Lutheran Church in Seoul (also see Documentation II and Appendix B). Upon my request he provided for me the following account written on March 11, 1986, in Seoul. It tells of his early connection and relationship with my brother.

In November 1953 I arrived in Korea, reporting as an Air Force chaplain to my new unit at Osan Air Base (K-55). Within a few months, in addition to my normal chaplain duties at Osan, I conducted a monthly Lutheran communion service at Suwon Air Base (K-13). Through this activity I became acquainted with a Korean employee of the Suwon chapel. One of his duties was to prepare the chapel for my services.

This employee had been a student at a college in Seoul. His studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the Korean War. While employed at the Suwon chapel, he and some of his college friends began a night school for Koreans, whose primary focus was the teaching of English. Sometime in the spring of 1954 he explained to me that he and his friends would like to begin an English language Sunday School, but needed appropriate materials. He asked whether I might be able to secure such literature. I contacted one of the churches in Minneapolis, which began sending him sufficient lessons for his needs.

Several months later I was advised that Dr. [O. H.] Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Missouri Synod's Mission Board, and Dr. [William] Danker, a missionary in Japan, were planning a trip to Korea for the purpose of exploring the potential of beginning Lutheran mission work in the country. It was my privilege,

together with two other LCMS chaplains stationed at Osan (John W. Behnken, Jr. and Ben Hoffmann) to accompany our visitors on their survey trip. We made sure that the itinerary included a visit to Suwon Air Base, so that they might meet this young Korean employee of the Suwon chapel and learn from him of his educational project.

Many years later I learned that this Korean employee eventually became, not only a member of the Lutheran Church, but also the current President of the Lutheran Church of Korea, Dr. Won-Sang Ji. Thus it was especially meaningful to me that he officially installed me as pastor of International Lutheran Church, Seoul, in July 1985.

Won-Sang's "night school" at Suwon, mentioned in the above writing, later made a positive impression on various Lutheran church leaders who visited Korea during that time. It is revealing to read the correspondence between Dr. O. H. Schmidt and Chaplain Arthur W. Meyer and their comments (see Documentation II and Appendix B), and the report of Missionary W. J. Danker from Japan (Documentation III). In these documents, it was mentioned that this humble night school project might provide a natural link for beginning full scale missionary work by the LCMS in Korea. From the beginning of this school (primary and junior high levels) for poor children during and immediately after the war, I was fully informed by my brother about his activities and I tried to play a limited role from the United States. I talked to friends about the school and wrote to them in St. Louis and in St. Paul, Minn., where my friend Rev. Drews had his parish and school (Central Lutheran School Association). Won-Sang in the meantime kept his word to those Lutheran visitors and later joined the KLM.

After graduating from a Presbyterian Theological Seminary (now Han-Shin University), Won-Sang served for a few years as an evangelist at Shin-Il Presbyterian Church in Seoul. In early

1958 he rendered some significant assistance to the KLM missionaries, and in 1960 he came to the KLM as an executive staff member responsible for the Correspondence Course Department (KLM Minutes, Jan. 1960). After the completion of a colloquy program under the KLM, he was ordained on March 28, 1965, into the Lutheran ministry in Korea, and became a member of the KLM from July 2, 1965 (KLM Minutes 65-25; 65-18; March 1963, 7pp.). He was the first Korean Lutheran pastor ordained in Korea. He also took a year of post-graduate study at Japan Lutheran Theological College and Seminary in Tokyo. He served Immanuel Lutheran congregation in Seoul for a number of years and then as the pastor of Choong-Ang Lutheran Church from September 7, 1967 to 1979. In the meantime he was elected the first Korean chairman of **Han-Kuk Rutu-Kyo Sunkyo-hoi** (the interim body between the KLM and the LCK) in February 1971, serving together with Missionary Paul Bartling as co-chairman, and later became the president of the LCK in 1973. President Ji, with his dynamic personality and "fearless" leadership, has been carrying out his manifold tasks ever since within the LCK and in Korean Christendom at large. He has both the conviction and strength to "push" the work forward in the era of the 1970s and 1980s. In 1979, Concordia College in St. Paul, Minnesota conferred on him a Litt. D. degree.

Under his able leadership, things began to move faster. My departure for Switzerland thus cut a path for new leadership. Under divine guidance this move proved to be a blessing to the subsequent years of Lutheranism in Korea.

Furthermore, a growing number of national pastors in subsequent years began to assume more responsibilities both at the central and local levels (see Appendix G) and their leadership was increasingly more visible in actual operation. Expatriate missionaries, on the other hand, have assumed administrative and leadership roles but in a way that has not been obtrusive. Or to

say it another way, they have played supportive and enabling roles even while holding positions of leadership.

For a while this new development caused some positive rethinking in the minds of both missionaries and national leaders as to their roles in the new situation of the LCK. At any rate, this was a mutually edifying period of growth into a greater day of service for the church in Korea.

My leaving Korea in some ways resulted in a number of obvious repercussions, for my involvement had so far been quite visible. The first thing was the re-adjustment and re-examination of the role of each missionary and national leader. Although my post in Geneva had a close relationship with Lutheran churches in Asia including the KLM/LCK, I naturally could not maintain the same relation with it as before. The work was connected but the role was changed. First of all, I had to resign all my previous posts and responsibilities in Korea. My new office in Geneva would only allow me to carry on a more or less consultative role with the LCK. Consequently, a reorganization of work assignments in the KLM and reassessment of some of its programs became almost mandatory. A number of significant changes took place: new style of operation, new leadership, new avenues of service, as well as new problems. It was also a period of new maturation for the Lutheran work in Korea.

### **3. A Crucial Test**

A crucial test came through a kind of an attempted 'coup.' It was a painful experience in which relationships suffered and the cooperative atmosphere of the KLM was seriously damaged. We may record it as "the agony of the Mass Communication Team" in the annals of the KLM. It was a classic demonstration of human weakness and failure in the most vital area of interpersonal relationships.

The BFM/LCMS had planned to send a team of mass communication specialists to India in order to strengthen and further enhance the mission work there. However, visas for India were not forthcoming so it was proposed that the team go to Korea instead. The KLM responded favorably and asked the BFM to call the team for work in Korea. The KLM reasoned that the team might bring freshness and new vigor to the already successful mass media work. Furthermore, this team might fill in some of the vacuum created by my departure.

The team consisted of Rev. Delmar J. Glock, a veteran missionary in Japan and Okinawa with 15 years experience as Lutheran Hour branch manager, and Ms. Marie-Louise Gebhardt, who had been born in China and had worked in advertising and public relations in Omaha, Nebraska, and also at the LCMS headquarters in St. Louis. The two were formally called by the BFM for a mass media ministry in Korea and were heartily welcomed into the midst of the KLM fellowship upon their arrival in April 1969.

During the time that the team was preparing in America for their new venture in Korea, Ms. Gebhardt wrote:

We are very happy for the new direction that our Synod's mission board is taking in attempting to utilize the media to reach the masses through electronics and print in a format that is indigenous to Oriental culture. . . Korea is basically a Christian nation, the Lutheran Church there has done an outstanding job in the use of mass media, and our task will be to strengthen the Christian witness and uncover new methods and media for possible use throughout the world. (*The Lutheran Witness*, April, 1969, p. 26)

Assigned to Korea for an initial period of three years, the mass media ministry team was to study methods of coordinating and enlarging the use of all kinds of media both printed and electronic. Both members of the team were well qualified for their task of

research and development of the most effective utilization of the mass media, aiming both to strengthen this arm of the KLM and to point out possible new avenues of mass media ministry in other parts of the world.

Upon their arrival in Korea the members of the team engaged in talks with the members of the KLM and some outside local experts in communication fields. The structure of the KLM mass communication department was reassessed and was reorganized into more specialized areas. The team was to play a key role in assisting some of the Korean staff members. However, even before this machinery with "a big sound and thunder" caught fire, some signs of deterioration in personal and professional relationships became evident. A red light was beginning to blink. The team's lack in understanding their mission in Korea and within KLM in particular, the local Korean culture, and the basic nature and characteristics of the KLM certainly contributed to this unhappy incident. Whether the actual situation of the KLM was or was not agreeable to the team members was another matter. Their role was to respect the situation and learn from it. Sensitivity was needed, but they missed this first vital point. The fatal blow for the team was its hasty issuing, after only 18 months, of the "MASS COMM TEAM REPORT" in November 1970, which denounced the KLM, its leadership, work and principles. Parts of their criticism read:

- 1) "The real KLM situation is almost a mirror opposite to their idealistic assumptions and expectations."
- 2) "The team feels that it cannot do what it came to do in Korea within the context of the KLM as it is today."
- 3) "The team feels that there probably is no mission which needs more help, or is deserving of less help, than the KLM."

These and other generalized, accusatory and vindictive conclusions of the mass comm team caused profound disbelief and

dismay. The KLM reacted with a firm and decisive conclusion that the team had to go as the KLM could not go. When an invited guest is disgruntled, he, not the host, has to leave. A much disappointed and discouraged KLM had to take action, by accepting the resignation of the team.

Again, what are the reasons for this sad drama? There may be value in enumerating some of them. (This is my personal assessment.)

- 1) This is a classic example of the truism that wisdom must precede knowledge. Only in a wise hand can expert knowledge shine its full measure of light. A superiority complex, even with superior professional knowledge, does not work.
- 2) This incident demonstrates that interpersonal relationships are far more important than professional skills and management. When a cordial relationship is present, all other good things may follow. Behind the agony of the mass comm team demise were long months of deteriorating personal and professional relationships. The team had naively trampled on the sacred ground of the KLM's garden cultivated for some 12 years.
- 3) The team evidently underestimated the importance of total commitment to and identity with the fortunes and failures of the KLM. That is to say, they should have been committed team members of the total KLM, not just a small specialist team.
- 4) Learning the local language is vital in any cross-cultural communication enterprise. Because the team had only a short-term commitment for service in Korea, they could not devote sufficient time to language study.
- 5) The mass comm team could not find their identity and place in the life of the KLM and its work style. In this regard the KLM might have been more understanding and helpful.
- 6) The team made a serious error, not advertently no doubt but by the lack of understanding the local culture, in a most sensitive area by changing Korean staff position without the understanding of the KLM.
- 7) The above mistake led to another, even more serious. The team members became personally involved with an internal problem involving KLM leadership, stirring up inter-staff rivalry. Their action did in effect amount to an attempted coup within the KLM.



- 8) Within a relatively short period of time after their arrival in Korea the team made public harsh and rash judgments on the KLM and its work in a form of *kobal* (indictment) to the BFM/LCMS, without adequate understanding of the KLM.

As a result of the team's misguidance, a number of Korean national staff members also experienced unhappiness. They might have miscalculated the situation and were looking for personal gain and/or testing my brother's mettle.

The mass comm team incident was a crisis which might have created much more serious consequences. Fortunately, however, the fire was extinguished in time. Through it, all parties concerned learned a good lesson. Some of the involved national staff members, evidently misled by the mass comm team, were identified, and the danger was recognized early enough to avoid serious rupture of staff relationships. This unhappy experience was a testing stone for the leadership of the KLM and had significance for its internal solidarity. The unfortunate ordeal of this 21-month period ended with the termination of the Mass Communication Team's service in Korea.<sup>[6]</sup>

#### **4. Formation of the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK)**

It is more correct and theologically accurate to say that the "Lutheran Church" in Korea existed from 1958. There were already Lutheran Christians duly confirmed into the Lutheran faith and its fellowship, as well as Lutheran pastors both national and expatriate; and the Word of God was being proclaimed and the Holy Sacraments were being properly administered by the duly

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[6] A comprehensive Report on the Mass Communication Team was written in March, 1971, by Rev. Paul Bartling for discussion with Rev. Paul Strege on March 23, 1971, in response to the "MASS COMM TEAM REPORT" dated Nov. 18, 1970 and signed by D. J. Glock and M.-L. Gebhardt.

called and ordained servants of God. Lutheran worship was held, and a local Lutheran congregation was formed in early 1959. Therefore terms like "KLM" and "LCK" have a more organizational, ecclesial significance and are expedient descriptions in putting the history of the Lutheran work in Korea into a meaningful time sequence and work classification.<sup>[7]</sup>

Following the inauguration of the Lutheran work in Korea in 1958 the Korea Lutheran Mission (KLM) was officially organized in order to be recognized both by the Korean government and by other church bodies in Korea. This was a legal requirement under the Korean Government for operating the kind of work which the KLM intended. Even today the "Juridical Person KLM" is the owner of all the Lutheran properties and operations under Korean Law. The functional governing body in 1971 was the KLM Conference comprised of national pastors and expatriate missionaries. From the very beginning, as noted earlier, the KLM undertook its mission work with both Korean national and expatriates working closely together as partners.

In light of the growth and development of the Lutheran Church, the time had come to broaden the base of its governing structure. The first step was to draft a constitution with by-laws which would serve the church during a period of transition from a "mission" to a national Lutheran church body. Drafted in 1970, the constitution introduced a system of co-chairmanship, one Korean national and one expatriate missionary as co-chairpersons. Until that time an American missionary was the chairman of the KLM. Under the new name of **Han-Kuk Rutukyo Sunkyohoi** (literally, Korea Lutheran Mission Assembly), the Constitution and By-Laws were adopted on February 26, 1971 (Appendix D). The first assembly elected Rev. Won-Sang JI and Rev. Paul

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[7] Cf. KLM Minutes Nov. 8, 1969; and Thomas Coates' study of "KLM: The Church in Mission," 1971, pp. 2, 3, 29.

Bartling co-chairmen, and chose the members of the Executive Board. In addition to the chairman and co-chairman, the officers were secretary, Rev. Hae-Chul KIM, and treasurer, Rev. Maynard Dorow. Executive Board members were Rev. In-Bong IM, Rev. John Hodde, Mr. Jin-Ki PAIK and Mr. Kyung-Bae LEE. The **sunkyohoi** constitution upheld the supreme importance of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the validity and importance of the Lutheran Confessions (see below). It also expressed its determination to carry out the objectives and functions of a church so as to enhance the ministry of the entire Christian Church in Korea and elsewhere under the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>[8]</sup>

At the assembly in 1973, the name was changed to "Lutheran Church in Korea" (LCK). For a brief time the name Korea Lutheran Church (KLC) was used, but it was soon amended. It was not a change in the constitution.

At this general convention Rev. Won-Sang JI was chosen as the

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- [8] Some suggestions were offered by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS regarding the constitutional revision due to the change in the basic structure of the church. It was evidenced by the statement of LCMS New Orleans Convention, 1973:

To Express Appreciation to the Churches in Mexico and Korea  
Resolution 2-26

Report 2-01, II, "Korea and Mexico" (CW, p. 33)

WHEREAS, The Korea Lutheran Church revised its constitution as suggested by the CTCR of the Synod; and

WHEREAS, The Lutheran Synod of Mexico included a paragraph in its constitution more specifically listing the Creeds to which that Synod subscribes as suggested by agencies of the Synod; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Synod recognize with appreciation that its sister churches in Korea and Mexico have concurred in the suggestions made by the Synod in 1971 Resolution 3-03 and pray that God will richly bless their labors for His Kingdom in their respective lands.

ACTION: *None. Referred under omnibus Res. 4-47 to the Board of Directors*, New Orleans Convention 1973.

president and Rev. Paul Bartling as vice-president, and a new Executive Board was formed. Since then the recognized church body has been the "Lutheran Church in Korea" whereas all legal matters, including title to properties, are handled under the original "Juridical Person Korea Lutheran Mission."

The confessional basis written into the constitution is true to the Lutheran tradition and at the same time reflects realistically the situation of the church in Korea at that time. Article II reads:

All members of the Korea Lutheran Church accept without reservation the following:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and as the only rule and norm of faith and practice.
2. The three ecumenical creeds, namely the Apostles', the Nicene and Athanasian, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, as true and universally valid expositions of Holy Scripture and statements of Christian doctrine.

A further paragraph states:

The Korea Lutheran Church also acknowledges the doctrinal validity and the historical importance of the Large Catechism of Martin Luther, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord, as further expressions of the evangelical theology of the Lutheran Reformation.

The distinction between the Small Catechism and the Confessio Augustana on the one hand and the other writings of the *Book of Concord* on the other was made primarily because only the former writings were available in the Korean language for actual use by the Lutheran pastors and congregations.

## Chapter X

### LCK : Its Polity and Policy

#### 1 . Form and Operation

Along with the growth and development of the Lutheran work in Korea came the need to broaden the base of the governing structure of the church body. It was time to draft a constitution and by-laws which might serve the church more effectively. The "Constitution and By-Laws of the Korean Lutheran Sunkyohoi," dated February 26, 1971 (see Appendix D), laid the foundation so that the Lutheran constituency could articulate the final drafting of the LCK Constitution. The LCK was thus organized as an autonomous church in 1971. Its form of polity combines congregational and synodical elements. Its general assembly currently elects the president and other officers every four years, and the executive committee members every two years.

Both by its constitution and practice the LCK operates on the congregational principle which stems from the scriptural doctrines of the church and the ministry. Whatever does not conform with this congregational principle is not in step with the basic spirit of the LCK's polity and policy. From early on Lutherans in Korea saw the church's work to be governed not so much by the letter of constitution or by-laws, as by the unwritten rule and consensus of mutual trust and confidence. This was especially true during the time of KLM when things were relatively small-scale and simple. Those methods hardly seem recommendable for the complex society and situations of today. Everything nowadays must be regulated, if not dictated, by clear terms of reference or

regulations. However, even without articulated and detailed rules everything seems to have gone quite smoothly in those early years of KLM. At times there was no clear-cut division of tasks. Each one did his part, as seen most reasonable, and did more as the need arose, without questioning the lines of responsibility and command. Under this "primitive" style of operation there were no power struggles to be seen among the KLM personnel. **Form** and titles might be considered important and necessary, also for smooth operation of the church, but a **spirit** of congenial cooperation can easily supersede form. In the KLM, collegiality received top priority.

The end of the 1960s through the early 1970s was a period of transition. No longer was the KLM's "family style" operation adequate to meet increasing complexities. From this point of view my leaving Korea for Geneva in July 1968 was timely and appropriate, for a new era calling for another type of leadership and a new style of operation had arrived. Dr. Thomas Coates, missionary in Korea from 1969 to 1972, commented on the new development. In his "Letter from Korea" published in *The Lutheran Witness* (Feb. 1970, p. 41), he discussed the development of the KLM and in a later letter commented on the church's movement into the 1970s.

Ever since the entry of Lutheranism into Korea in 1958 the objective has been to develop a national Korea Lutheran Church — self-governing, self-propagating, and, in time, self-supporting. Starting from scratch, a program of this kind obviously must take on long-range dimensions. After 12 years, however, it can now be reported that the goal, at least in terms of self-government and self-propagating, is beginning to come into view. . . .<sup>[1]</sup>

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[1] *The Lutheran Witness*, August 1970, "Letter from Korea: Plan 'Go Home' Strategy," p. 209.

## 2. Shift of Emphases and Program Continuation

When the KLM began, its method was known among ourselves as the "A-approach," reflecting the broader contribution to the church at large through the use of mass media.<sup>[2]</sup> With limited manpower and resources it was in part a matter of priority-setting and not an either/or proposition in mission policy. During that time, however, there was some tension between the BWM in the United States and the KLM in this regard. The BWM expected more of a "B-approach," meaning the establishment of more congregations and the strengthening of the denominational Lutheran aspect. The KLM, on the other hand, had a somewhat different feeling in light of the actual field situation and the lack of national workers and facilities to expand the evangelistic work. Conference meetings with Dr. Herman Koppelman and Rev. Paul Strege, staff members of the BWM, on January 4-7, 1965, provided an opportunity for both sides to comprehensively assess the work and to exchange their different views with explanations and comments.<sup>[3]</sup> As time went on, the emphases, not necessarily the

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[2] KLM Rambling Record, Nov. 8, 1969, pp. 1f:

"A-approach" with the broader contribution to the church at large and "B-approach" with the more specific concern also for the establishment of the Lutheran Church in Korea as a denomination were reviewed and discussed. These developments are attributed as a response to the needs apparent in a particular situation and the opportunities thus presented for meaningful ministry. The historical development of the KLM was not all that premeditated, but was rather a quite natural and spontaneous response to the specific context and situation which was unique to Korea.

Theologically and conceptually KLM recognizes that the Church is and was already here in Korea, but the activities falling under the category of "B-approach" come more specifically into the area of a denomination. These activities grow out of the KLM's recognition, which has become more and more clear through the years, that the ministries of "A-approach" and "B-approach" are a matter of "both-and" and not a choice of "either-or."

[3] On these meetings, 14 pages of KLM Rambling Record were written.



basic policy, had to be modified, while the existing programs of KLM likewise had to continue. Dr. Coates, in an assigned study, took up in detail the interrelation between "A-approach" and "B-approach"<sup>[4]</sup> and their real meaning and significance.

When there was virtually no Lutheran group in existence, when works were in all respects new and Lutherans were strange to the people in Korea, the KLM's interests tended more toward a "Lutheran presence" idea and being a "plus" to the Christian church already existing in Korea. At the same time, however, the KLM assertively laid out a basic policy expressed in clear terms.

1. A clear understanding must be given that the KLM does not stand in doctrinal unity and agreement with the host groups [already existing denominations] and inquirers in Korea.

2. The groups [many interested church leaders, independent groups and congregations who had shown interest in getting into the Lutheran church] are clearly given to understand that the KLM is not interested in 'sheep stealing.'<sup>[5]</sup>

Reading the KLM minutes of 1958 and 1959 in light of the new developments in the early 1970s is profitable and enlightening. There is no basic shift in policy, only in emphases resulting from changes which took place in those twelve years as more personnel and resources for mission work were made available.

### **3. Events of Significance**

During the 1970s two events took place which helped shape and

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These records reduce the amount of Minutes needed to get the same information. Furthermore, the record seems to indicate a lot of tension beneath all of this.

[4] "The Lutheran Church in Korea: A Study of the Church in Mission," Thomas Coates, March 29, 1971 (mimeographed 38pp.), pp. 9-12.

[5] See KLM Minutes, October 25, 1958. At this meeting a "three year evangelistic plan" was already talked about.



define the self-identity and tasks of the Lutherans in Korea.

The first was a "Consultation on Christian Education" held in October, 1971. For this conference Dr. Herbert Schaefer, then an executive staff member of the LWF, served as consultant and resource person. The Consultation articulated the nature of the church and nature of the LCK stating:

The Lutheran Church in Korea is a member of the total community of God's people who by the power of the Spirit confess Christ as Savior and Lord and live a new life in Him. Specifically, the Lutheran Church in Korea stands within the theological and liturgical tradition of the Lutheran Reformation, works within the context of the special social, cultural, and political situation of Korea, shares with the total Christian church in this land the distinctive contributions of Lutheran confessional theology, with its specific emphases on Law and Gospel, Word and Sacraments, and works together with other churches on both the national and international levels in furthering God's mission in the world.<sup>[6]</sup>

The consultation also identified four basic functions of the church, namely, evangelism, Christian education, service, and worship, all of which are also entrusted to the LCK.<sup>[7]</sup>

The second significant event was the 1977 "Seminar on Mission" (Oct. 17-22) conducted by the LCK, which laid out broad strategies and direction for mission in Korea during the next decade. The seminar outlined a pattern somewhat similar to the previous 1971 consultation, describing the church in mission and outlining priorities and objectives of a ten-year plan for the LCK at various levels of its engagement, taking into consideration of course the development of the LCK from its inception in 1958. Rev. L. Paul Bartling, a missionary of the LCK from 1958 to 1975, served as a resource person. This seminar was significant in that it gave some concrete prospectives for the future of LCK, laying

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[6] See the "Statements Drafted by the Lutheran Church in Korea at a Consultation on Christian Education, October 1971," p. 1.

[7] *Ibid.*

the groundwork of a ten-year strategy for mission. Rev. Bartling gave four lectures at the seminar:

- The Meaning of Mission (which reviewed the “Mission Affirmations, 1965”);
- The Mission of the Lutheran Church in Korea Today;
- Structuring the Church for Mission;
- The Kind of Church the LCK wants to be.

The seminar defined the mission of the LCK:

The mission of the Lutheran Church in Korea, based upon an evangelical [meant in the sense of the Korean word *bok-um-juk* (in harmony with the gospel), not in the sense of the German word *evangelisch*] confession of faith, is that work of participating positively in God's mission so that His will might be accomplished in society, furthering the growth of the church and service to the neighbor, by witnessing together with the entire church to the Gospel of God's redemption to this nation and its people as well as to all humanity.<sup>[8]</sup>

At the seminar six areas of mission were given priority: pioneering and planting new churches in different parts of Korea, implementing the spiritual or mental (**jung-shin-juk**) and financial self-reliance under an established policy for self-support (**ja-rip jung-chaek**), strengthening the theological training

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[8] See the “Statements” drafted at the “Seminar on Mission,” October 17-22, 1977, p. 1. Two documents from this seminar should be noted: Preparatory summary document on introduction to the seminar and summary outline of the four lectures (6 pp. mimeographed), and “Statements” drafted at the seminar in three pages. Both are very helpful. The participants in the seminar included national pastors and missionaries, mass media and department heads, and some congregational delegates, totaling some 12 clergy and 10 laypersons. The seminar convened for six days at a retreat center of the Benedictine Monastery at Waegwan in the southern part of Korea. I was sorry not to be able to attend the seminar. At the time I was a guest professor at Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, Papua New Guinea, on assignment by the Missionswerk of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany.

program, promoting social welfare ministry, strengthening Christian education, and continuing commitment to ministries through mass communication and other agencies.

The strategies and priorities outlined at the "Seminar on Mission" were indications of the winds of change in Korean society and religious life, including the LCK. They called for a definite shift of emphases in order to meet the new needs and challenges which included ministry through local congregations, growth of the church through more active evangelistic programs, continued education for the people within the church, and the stepping up of leadership training programs for the church and its work. At the same time the consultation reaffirmed the LCK's continuing commitment to ministries being carried on in the context of the total Christian church in Korea. At the time of the seminar the LCK had only 1,042 baptized members associated with nine congregations (seven of the congregations being in Seoul and two in Pusan). However, the number of people attending worship services and Sunday school classes each week totaled about 1,340.

The major follow-up to the "Seminar on Mission" was the "Capital Project Planning, 1978-88" of March 1978 (updated November 1980). This "Ten Year Plan," as it became known, provided projection as to when, where and how the LCK planned to implement its programs of planting new churches throughout the country during the next decade. It was a big package with an ambitious program. Significant assistance from partners overseas, especially the LCMS, was definitely required in order to follow through on it adequately. The LCK proposed assuming a thirty percent share of the capital costs, anticipating that at this stage seventy percent would still have to come from overseas. The LCK was committed to this plan and immediately began gearing up for implementing it. Concerted efforts were made for local congregations to become self-reliant and financially self-

supporting within designated time frames. Specific goals and deadlines were agreed upon for local congregations not only to assume the expenses for sustaining the ministry of Word and Sacraments in their own midst, but also to assist and support other new evangelistic work. Special attention and emphasis were given to the recruitment and training of more pastors and church workers. After extensive discussion and revision of earlier drafted proposals, this basic plan has been followed as closely as circumstances have allowed.

## **Chapter XI**

### **The Church in Mission**

**T**he LCK is a church in mission. It has carried out its work sometimes on the basis of original design, and at other times in response to immediate needs and demands. The LCK began with the idea of establishing an indigenous church in Korea and proceeded with certain lofty principles of the "three-selves," as expressed in the "Nevius Method." As time went on plans occasionally had to be modified, which is a healthy response toward the changing times and life of the people.

#### **1. In the Rooting Process**

The functional working of the church was greatly affected not only by the prevailing circumstances but also by limited resources, the wisdom of the operation, and the need to make effective use of available space.

The only contact point for the KLM in the first months was the homes of American missionaries of KLM. After my family and I arrived in September, 1958, our house at Yak-Soo-Dong frequently served as an office for KLM. Our newly installed telephone was busy, as was my wife who prepared tea and refreshments for visitors and inquirers. The KLM established its first office in May 1959 in modest rented quarters near the Seoul Central Railway Station. When larger facilities were required in 1960, the offices were moved to the Duksoo Building near the city hall of Seoul. Early in 1962 the KLM, desiring a central location, a bookstore and a street-front room for the display of Christian literature, began to consider building or purchasing its own office facility. Professor William J. Danker encouraged the idea of acquiring an office

facility which would at the same time serve as an investment for future income for the Lutheran Church.<sup>[1]</sup>

An effort was first made to purchase the Duksoo Building in which the KLM was renting office space.<sup>[2]</sup> However, financial arrangements could not be made in time to complete the purchase. Within a few months another building in the immediate area, the Jedong Building, became available. Although Korea was still in the economic doldrums following the Korean War, economic measures taken by the government of President PARK Chung-Hee promised an upturn in the near future. The KLM persuaded the responsible officers of the LCMS to guarantee a loan by the Synod's Church Extension Fund for the purchase of the Jedong Building.<sup>[3]</sup> The purchase of income producing property by a mission field was then unprecedented in the LCMS.

The Jedong Building was purchased with a loan in the amount of \$ 150,889.58 at an interest rate of 5.5 percent. The retirement schedule of the mortgage was spread over twenty years and three months, with annual payments of \$ 12,486. If payments were made

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[1] Cf. a letter of appreciation from Missionary Paul Bartling to Prof. William Danker, dated Nov. 6, 1962.

[2] The "Brief Regarding the Proposed Purchase of the Duksoo Building in Seoul, Korea" (a 24-page, single-spaced typewritten document prepared by Maynard Dorow) was submitted to the BWM/LCMS by the Korea Lutheran Mission in March 1962. See KLM Resolution 62-8. For this section, I owe much to a concise descriptive paper prepared by Missionary Maynard Dorow, "Economic Activities of the Lutheran Church in Korea, Oct., 1975," which was prepared at my request for the reference of the International Study Team, of which I was a member, appointed to evaluate the business investments of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea, October-November, 1975.

[3] The "Brief Regarding the Proposed Purchase of the Jedong Building in Seoul, Korea" (prepared by Missionary James Lauer on the basis of the Duksoo Building Report) was submitted to the BWM/LCMS by the KLM in September 1962. Also cf. KLM Resolution 62-13. The Jedong Building played a significant role in the history of KLM/LCK. For this reason, I am providing here generous space for the story related to the building.

according to the schedule, principal and interest would total \$ 249,743.

The Jedong Building was a five-story structure with about 1500 square feet of office space per floor. The KLM then used the top floor and one room on the fourth floor for its administration, mass media and other work. In addition, a street level room was used as a bookstore and a display of Christian literature. The remaining office space was rented to various businesses. Over the years the building was almost always fully occupied.

The building showed an annual profit of approximately \$ 17,000 to \$ 20,000 for an average return on the investment of about 13 percent. Additional payments toward loan retirement were made in 1966, 1968, and 1969, reducing the retirement period and allowing the mortgage to be paid off earlier. The final payment on the loan was made in June, 1976, only thirteen and a half years after purchase, markedly less than the twenty and one-quarter years originally scheduled.

Such income producing projects as the Jedong Building and other "local resources" (special contributions for various work programs) and careful management of the funds have left many blessings — as well as food for thought. The existence of income producing real estate and capital funds, particularly in a small and young church body, raise a variety of questions in regard to the church's subsequent self-understanding, its total stewardship life, and the future direction of the entire enterprise. The KLM/LCK attempted to forestall potential problems by a careful delineation of the principles governing the management and the use of the funds and their earnings. Nevertheless, the scope of the LCK's economic activities suggests the need for a comprehensive self-study and evaluation of this dimension of the LCK program.

The story of the Jedong Building makes us reflect on a number of significant things which can be useful for the future development of the LCK. The successful conclusion of the Jedong

Building project on financial terms indicated careful planning, good timing and the responsible management of income from the rent and investments. This certainly added strong credibility to the leadership of the KLM/LCK in the eyes of many overseas friends, especially the leaders in the LCMS. It is true that there were a number of factors in the Korean financial scene during those years which were conducive to an income-producing project and capital investment; however, the integrity and responsible attitude of the LCK should not be overlooked or underestimated.

## **2. Multiple Ministry Center**

The Jedong Building enabled the idea of a multi-ministry center to take root and grow, though on a somewhat limited scale. The idea was to coordinate effectively and efficiently the various ministries and programs under the umbrella of KLM in the 1960s. With the purchase of the building practically all programs of KLM, except the evangelistic work in local meeting places, could be housed in one place: administration, Korea Lutheran Hour, Christian Correspondence Courses, Concordia Sa, bookstore and theological training program.

However, a truly full-scale implementation of the multi-ministry idea came a little later when the "Lutheran Center" was built in 1975. The plan for this "multiple ministry center" was several years in the making. The idea was that the Lutheran Center would provide a central staging area for the varied programs and ministries that constituted the "A-approach" of the LCK work. This included not only the mass media programs of radio and television, Christian Correspondence Courses and the literature and publication program but also educational programs such as lay training and Bible study institutes. Also included were social ministry and counseling services, ministry for the blind and a fellowship center. The Center also provided facilities for the



library, classrooms and offices of the Lutheran Theological Academy. The top floor of the Center served as the worship center for a congregation, Choong-Ang Lutheran Church (formerly Trinity Church). The Center idea, realized in this way, represented the conviction of the worth of the "A-approach" of the LCK and gave expression to its desire to intensify and diversify the programs under that approach.

It was particularly gratifying to me that the Lutheran World Federation contributed a large portion (\$ 157,000) of the cost of the Center project.<sup>[4]</sup> For I had the privilege of personally handling this project while I was the Asia Secretary of the Department of Church Cooperation of the LWF. I vividly remember the scene as the CCC/LWF made their final decision on the LCK multi-ministry center project after long intensive discussions at the Commission meeting in Kecskemet, Hungary, in 1972. The Center project was received enthusiastically by the "Geneva people" due to its thorough and responsible plan, its substantiation by reliable data and documentation, and its convincing rationale for the church and the people in Korea.<sup>[5]</sup>

The Center has made an incalculable contribution to the work of the Lutheran Church in Korea. Throughout the years, the multi-ministry idea has been faithfully implemented, allowing for changing circumstances and needs. Adding Choong-Ang Lutheran

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[4] Several major donors made possible the LWF contribution of \$ 157,000, namely, the LWF German, Swedish and U. S. National Committees and the Church Development Service in Germany. Other sources of funds for the project were: The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, \$ 166,000; the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, \$ 15,000; and the Lutheran Church in Korea, \$ 29,369.

[5] Concerning this Center Project, cf. CCC/LWF 1972 Agenda and Minutes; Missionary John Hodde's personal correspondence to Won Yong Ji dated June 22, 1971; Ji's personal letter to Rev. Paul Bartling in Korea, dated April 25, 1973; "REPORTS 1970-1977" by the LWF, 1977, 259; CCC/LWF 1973 documents related to "Asia."

congregation to the Center complex represented an effective blending of the "A" and the "B" approaches.

The planners of the "multi-ministry center" brought enthusiasm and conviction to their work, as well as good foresight. In the course of time some of the functions of the Center, as well as its facilities, have been modified to meet changing needs, but the original objectives and hopes of the undertaking have not changed. There could hardly have been a better investment for the future of the Lutheran Church in Korea.

### **3. Local Congregations**

From the early period of KLM, evangelistic work aimed at establishing Lutheran congregations was foremost in the minds of all. Giving high priority to the "A-approach" certainly did not mean the rejection of the "B-approach" (the more traditional mission method of aggressively establishing a denominational strength and identity). After starting the first Lutheran congregation in Seoul on Pentecost Sunday of 1959 (Immanuel then, "Tobong" now), St. John's congregation (now, "Wang-sim-ni") was established a few years later. In those early days there were only three expatriate missionaries and one national clergy; and the missionaries were still studying the Korean language.

But other evangelistic work could be done, taking advantage of the considerable general interest among people concerning the Reformation of Luther. A special program to celebrate the 442nd Anniversary of the Reformation was staged on the evening of October 31, 1959, at the Sam-I1-Dang auditorium in Seoul, with a large audience participating. In preparation, posters were posted in the city and invitations were sent out. It was the first public event of such a size sponsored by KLM. The program consisted of special singing, including the Reformation hymn of Martin Luther sung by a prominent male vocalist and music professor In-

Bum LEE, a lecture on the "Meaning of Luther's Reformation" presented by me, and presentation of the film, "Martin Luther." According to the Minutes of KLM (November 1959):

It was reported that the Reformation rally attracted an almost capacity crowd of 1300-1400 people. Because available space could not be found, the original plan for a three-day lecture series had to be altered to a one night lecture-movie program. The overall comments by those who attended were unanimous in commending those who made the program possible for a job well done.

The Reformation booklet, *Luther's Reformation* [pocket size, 64 pages, 10-31-59], written by Dr. Ji sold 114 copies at the rally. An additional 91 copies were taken by interested people. The cooperation of twenty-five members of Immanuel Lutheran Church was mobilized in the distribution of posters and ushering for the rally. The rally attracted widespread interest among Christian leaders. The Christian newspaper carried extensive advertisements, together with coverage of the rally. HLKY, Christian Broadcast, rebroadcast the program at a later date. The entire cost of the rally was 153,000 hwan (ca. \$ 150.00). The KLM will prepare for another Reformation Day Rally in 1960.

Further plans for establishing congregations were made in a joint meeting of missionaries, two national pastors and representatives of Immanuel and St. John's congregations in Seoul which convened on January 5, 1966. This meeting, attended by sixteen participants, outlined a four-year work schedule for 1966-69. Goals were set as follows:

- 1) Further strengthening and nurturing of Immanuel and St. John's congregations;
- 2) Establishing a central congregation which would consider the special needs of urban life;
- 3) Establishing five congregations in Seoul;
- 4) Promoting self-support in the congregations;
- 5) Stressing the ministry of mercy and service.

In addition to the five points, mention was made that the LTA

was ready to open on the first Sunday in March of that year. There was also discussion on how to begin the proposed central congregation in Seoul, to promote work among the youth and students, and to foster fellowship among the graduates of the Correspondence Courses.

The next stage of planning, the Ten Year Plan of 1978 (cf. Ch. X.3), took the planting of the new congregations beyond Seoul to major cities all across Korea. The LCK has followed its plan seriously and updated it periodically. By 1987 the LCK had established a total of twenty congregations, seven of them in the capital city of Seoul and the others in the cities of Pusan, Taegu, Taejon, Chun-An, Inchon, Chung-Ju, Kwang-Ju, Jun-Ju and Su-Won.<sup>[6]</sup>

In addition to the local Korean congregations, there is the English-language International Lutheran Church and Center (ILC; also known as "Lutheran Service Center") at Hannam Dong in Seoul which has been closely associated with the KLM/LCK.<sup>[7]</sup> The KLM personnel actively participated in its planning stage in 1960 and following years, and throughout the years the ILC and the LCK have maintained a friendly relationship. The LCK expatriate missionaries and their families have given full support to the ILC endeavor and have been active in its parish program. Occasionally LCK programs were hosted at the ILC facilities. More recently, members of ILC have contributed generously to the newly established Luther Seminary at Shingal.

The ILC is one of five Lutheran ministry outreaches in the world which exist primarily to provide a Lutheran ministry of

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[6] Two interesting articles were written by Missionary David J. Susan: "The Church That Makes House Calls [SHIMBAHNG]," *The Lutheran Witness*, July 1978; "Praying and Sowing the Seed Together, *The Lutheran Layman*, July 1979.

[7] For this section, I am indebted to Rev. Arthur W. Meyer for his kindness in providing me with pertinent information and important data.

Word and Holy Sacrament to United States military personnel and their dependents stationed outside the United States and to United States government personnel and other civilians located in the same areas. This special ministry was until 1988 sponsored by the Division of Service to Military Personnel of LCUSA, representing the common concern for this type of ministry by four United States Lutheran bodies: AELC, ALC, LCA and LCMS.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### 4 . Evangelism and Education

Among the cardinal tasks of the church (namely, worship,

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- [8] The ILC ministry began in 1960 as a "Lutheran Service Center" which provided Lutheran worship as well as recreational facilities for U. S. military personnel. This ministry was then sponsored jointly by the National Lutheran Council (U. S.) and the LCMS. The Service Center was opened for use in 1962 and a chapel was added in 1963. In recent years the "service center" character of the ministry has diminished and the emphasis has shifted to the normal activities of a congregational ministry. ILC organized as a congregation in 1969 and has continued to receive support from the Lutheran Council in the U. S. A., successor organization to the National Lutheran Council. However, with the Lutheran merger and the formation of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Council disbanded as of January 1, 1988, and consequently ILC is now alternately supported by the LCMS and the new ELCA.

At this writing the composition of the parish is: USA military (11%), USA military dependents (28%), DOD personnel (9%), DOD dependents (12%), USA civilians overseas and their dependents (27%), non-USA, non-Korean personnel and dependents (2%), Koreans (11%). The Koreans who have identified with the parish are generally professionals trained in the USA, whose children are much more conversant in English than in Korean.

ILC has been served by nine pastors on a rotational basis between the major Lutheran judicatories. Most of them were retired military chaplains. The pastors and their terms of service: Wayne Daubenspeck (May 60-Sep. 63), Ernst Karsten (Sep. 63-May 66), H.W. Reinke (July 66-Oct. 68), Walter Huchthausen (Oct. 68-Sep. 69), Leonard Dale (Sep. 69-Aug. 76),

evangelism, education, service, and Christian fellowship), the LCK stresses evangelism (**jun-do** and **kyo-hoi sung-jang**) and the teaching ministry. This is evidenced by the establishment of local mission stations and congregations in recent years, the continuation of the correspondence courses, and the ever-increasing outreach of the Bethel Bible Study Program. The evangelism program extends to numerous major cities in South Korea. As Luther Seminary trains more workers, the problem of a shortage of pastors and evangelists may soon be solved, and active growth of the church seems to be on the horizon. Today the Bethel Bible Study Program is making a very meaningful contribution to all of Christendom in Korea, including the Roman Catholics. As far as I know, no single program of similar nature exerts such an extensive and intensive influence (see Chapter XII).

The LCK is keenly aware of the manifold tasks of the church today, facing enormous challenges and complex problems at all levels of life. Being the true church of Jesus Christ in the world today is an extremely difficult and demanding task. Challenges are coming from all directions. Korea is no exception. A systematic mobilization of believers is absolutely necessary. It is high time to put into practice the classical Reformation principle of the universal priesthood of all believers, in close partnership and mutual interdependence in Jesus Christ. A true renewal of the church can be possible by such mobilization of believers in Christ. The aim is a church in mission, a dynamic church living in the world and toward the world, carrying on Christian witness and service to all people as commissioned by the Savior Himself.

Dr. G. W. Hyatt, a former first vice-president of the LCMS and

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George Brosius (Aug. 76-Aug. 81), Viggo Aronsen (Aug. 81-April 85), Paul Huddle (April 85-July 85), Arthur W. Meyer (July 85 to present).

one who served in the Korean War as a chaplain, left these complimentary words after his visit to Korea in 1983:

The Korean Lutheran Church, a partner church with the Missouri Synod, is vibrant, active in mission, and filled with people who live with their faith . . . I wish all of you could see the marvelous things God is accomplishing through the Lutheran Christians in Korea. We could all be inspired by them.<sup>[9]</sup>

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[9] The Lutheran REPORTER, Dec. 12, 1983, p. 1.

## Chapter XII

### The Korea Bethel Bible Series

Since the first leadership seminar in January 1974 the Bethel Bible Series has continued to the present under the auspices of the LCK and has made a remarkable contribution to Korean Christianity throughout Korea. It has provided opportunity for Protestants and Catholics to gather around Bible study in intense two-week courses, building up an ecumenical fellowship that cuts through denominational boundaries and builds the church of Christ in Korea.

#### 1 . History

It all began in February of 1969 when Pastor Harley Swiggum, Executive Director of the Bethel Series in the United States, was invited to Korea to discuss what first steps could be taken to introduce the Bethel Series in Korea. Pastor Swiggum encouraged the formation of the Korea Bethel Series Committee and provided advice and assistance in developing the specific program for the Korean church.

Subsequently, an English-speaking class was held under the auspices of International Lutheran Church in Seoul and taught by a lay graduate of the Bethel Series in America.<sup>[1]</sup> Also, a number of Koreans later attended orientation clinics both in Japan and in

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[1] Miss Mildred Marohn was the lay graduate of the USA Bethel Series. She came to Korea as a missionary of the Lutheran Church and was teaching at Seoul Foreign School. Her enthusiasm for Bethel was instrumental in sparking interest in this program in Korea.



the United States. Then, in 1970 the Korea Bethel Series Committee was officially organized, and decisions were formally made to work for the preparation and implementation of the Bethel Series in Korea.

After receiving the approval and endorsement of Pastor Swiggum, the translation of the text of the Bethel Series materials was begun in 1971. In September of 1971 Pastor Swiggum again visited Korea at which time specific plans were discussed regarding the form, structure, and actual implementation of the Korea Bethel Series program.

A particularly significant contribution to this undertaking was made by Missionary L. Paul Bartling who devoted a few months of his home leave in 1973 to a special fund-raising effort. He raised the "seed money" for underwriting the costs to bring the Bethel Series into the life of the church in Korea.<sup>[2]</sup>

Finally, after five years of careful planning and preparation the first two-week orientation clinic of the Korea Bethel Series was conducted at the Christian Academy House on the northern outskirts of Seoul from January 27 to February 8, 1974. Fifty-six clergy from ten different denominations attended this first clinic.

Annual two-week Bethel Series clinics were held from 1974 to 1977. However, each year there were three times as many applicants as could be accommodated at the training seminar. Therefore in 1978 the Korea Bethel Series Committee decided to conduct two two-week workshops, one after the other. Both

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[2] In order to provide for capitalizing the Bethel program, for staging the first workshop, and for generating sufficient income to sustain the Bethel program, a special Korea Bethel Series Fund was established. With these resources available and at work generating additional income through investment in the Korean economy, the financial needs were met for translating and printing the text materials and for sponsoring the first orientation clinic. Moreover, it provided a financial base to cover the costs for the ongoing operation of the program in the early years.

sessions were filled and applications still had to be turned down, leaving a lengthy waiting list for the next seminar. These double seminars, with more than 150 persons in each session, have continued to the present with participants coming from Seoul to Pusan (north to south) and Sokcho to Incheon (east to west) — in short, from every corner of the country.

Additionally, the Korea Bethel Series translated and published four more titles, also authored by Dr. Harley Swiggum who wrote the basic series. These four courses are shorter in length and provide another two year's worth of adult Christian education materials at the parish level.<sup>[3]</sup> Leadership seminars for these courses have been taught each fall since 1980.

A recent ramification of the Korea Bethel Series reached back across the Pacific Ocean from Korea to Los Angeles, California, where the LCK Bethel program was conducted for the first time for some 40 Korean-speaking clergy in September, 1986.

## **2. Statistics**

The Bethel Series in Korea is being used by twenty different denominational groups, including an increasingly extensive use in Roman Catholic circles. These groups send theologically trained persons to the annual LCK-sponsored Bethel Series orientation workshops.

As of this writing a total of some 3,000 pastors, priests and Roman Catholic sisters have completed the two-week orientation clinic. They, in turn, have taught the Bethel series to over 150,000 persons in their churches, of whom 70,000 individuals have

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[3] The four additional courses are "The Ten Commandments," dealing with the law; "To Love and To Cherish," a course on marriage and family relationships; "Gems for Daily Living," treating Proverbs and Old Testament Wisdom literature; and "The Church Redemptive," dealing with the meaning and mission of the church.

completed this two-year parish course.

The Korea Bethel Series opted to use only the teacher-trainee materials of Bethel, and this higher level course is taught in the parishes rather than a less demanding congregational phase program used in English-speaking countries. The purpose is to keep the standards as high and as challenging as possible for the Korea Bethel Series.

In addition to the basic Bible overview series, 600 clergy have taken the shorter, fall-term select-topic leadership training programs and have taught these courses to some 20,000 persons in their parishes.

### **3. The Nature of the Program**

The Bethel Series program is a 40-unit (20 Old Testament and 20 New Testament), comprehensive, comprehensible overview of the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation presented in a fresh, appealing form. Originally written by Dr. Harley Swiggum for his parishioners in Madison, Wisconsin, the program has spread widely throughout the USA and other countries. This course was carefully translated and adapted for the Korean culture before presentation to pastors in Korea. The course includes a basic textbook, concept study cards and a series of study pictures, one per unit, used to help the student remember key points of the salvation story of Scripture.

An important dimension of the seminars is the strong camaraderie which builds up among the participants. Coming from all denominations of the Christian church, they experience a oneness which stems from a common sharing of the Word. In this way the Bethel Series has been making a significant contribution to ecumenism in Korea.

During the two-week intensive sessions students study from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Korea Bethel

Director Won-Sang JI, who is also president of the Lutheran Church in Korea, keeps the participants in good humor as they work through the textbook materials.

These materials are taught by Rev. Martin Rohlfing from Bethel headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin. Pastor Rohlfing's steadiness through four weeks of teaching, with only weekends off, caused a former student to dub him "a man of steel."

Pastor Rohlfing has conducted the Bethel seminars since 1978. While he speaks in English, the workshop participants are wired to their headsets listening to the simultaneous translation of his words into their Korean mother tongue. The translation team consists of Dr. Jong-Sam ("Sam") PARK, an ordained Presbyterian pastor who is also a dentist and holds a doctorate in sociology, and Rev. Sun-Hoi KIM, a professor at Luther Seminary.

After graduating from the training seminars, the students teach the Bethel Series program in their local parishes and the Word multiplies as it is taught once again at the congregational level.<sup>[4]</sup>

Both the seminar and congregational level Bethel courses are built on the key concept from Genesis 12 : 1-3, God's covenant promise to Abraham, that we are "Blessed — to be a blessing." This blessing has touched individuals and congregations throughout Korea and is continuing to do so.

#### **4 . Distinct Factors**

There are many Bible study programs in Korea, but what has

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[4]The parish level course is difficult, requiring two years of disciplined, persistent hard work. Weekly class sessions are two and one-half hours each and homework totals from 8 to 12 hours each week. Tests and Scripture reading, along with memorization of the key points in the 40 unit pictures, are quite demanding. Absenteeism or tardiness is almost unheard of. It is humorously asserted that a student enrolled in Bethel is not even permitted to die during the two year period of rigid study.

made the Bethel Series program “click” especially well?

Three distinct factors have contributed to the success of the Korea Bethel program under the blessing of God: 1) the high quality design of the materials uniquely suiting them to the Korean situation and need; 2) the ingenuity of the director of the Korea Bethel Series, Dr. Won-Sang JI; and 3) the dedicated cooperation and teamwork of the Bethel staff, Mr. Kyung-Bae LEE, Missionary Hilbert W. Riemer and other faithful workers in the program.

There are many fascinating episodes to tell about the Bethel Series. Some are told in the Bethel newsletter which is sent to all Bethel graduates and some are told in an article in *KOREA CALLING*, a Korea newsletter, Vol. 1. 20-5, May 1981, written by Missionary Riemer.<sup>[5]</sup>

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[5] Enthusiasm runs high by participants. One Bethel student from the Presbyterian church in Seoul had a son on the team of Korean Alpinists who conquered Mount Everest in 1978. His name was Sang-Don KOH. After studying Bethel she became so appreciative of God's word that she sent a Bible with her son to the top of Mount Everest and asked him to bury it in the snow on top. He did exactly that, making that Korean Bible the first Bible in any language to be left on the mountain.

Another student, Dr. Hwang-Kyung KOH, past president of Seoul Womens College, set the example par excellence for Bethel participants when she declined speaking invitations at four different international meetings — in Canada, Lebanon, Australia and Russia — because she had given top priority to her two-year Bethel Series Bible study program.

## Chapter XIII

### Luther Seminary

#### 1 . Its Background: the LTA

**I**t took nearly twenty years for the Presbyterians in Korea to begin a formal theological seminary program after the arrival of their first foreign missionary on the peninsula in 1885. Similarly, it took quite a while for the Lutherans to develop a leadership training program. Although denominational expansion was not the first priority on its agenda, the KLM was aware of the importance and need of some form of training program for future leadership. In the early years, however, it was not an easy task for KLM to start a viable training program. With a very small number of constituents, only a few expatriate missionaries and one national clergy, and in the midst of an increasing number of theological institutions of all types of Christian denominations and other higher educational institutions in Korea, it was a difficult situation indeed.

The idea of establishing a theological training program of some type was already under discussion as early as 1962 when a special colloquy program was set up. The BWM also took it up for discussion in May 1963. However, the time was not yet ripe for entertaining realistically the idea of a fully developed Lutheran theological seminary.

The KLM officially asked the BWM/LCMS in March 1964 to approve in principle the idea of establishing a Lutheran Theological Academy (LTA).<sup>[1]</sup> After receiving favorable reaction

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[1] A document related to Korea Lutheran Mission, March 7, 1964. WHEREAS.

from the BWM, the KLM appointed me as director of this program on Dec. 30, 1964,<sup>[2]</sup> and made a further request that the BWM give its support to the plan for opening a program by fall of 1965.<sup>[3]</sup> This request was made after much serious discussion on the basis

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the KLM after six years of study and experience on the field has worked out a tentative statement of its objectives and long range plans; and WHEREAS, those plans call for a leadership training program to provide properly qualified men for pastoral, evangelistic, teaching and other roles in the Lutheran Church in Korea; and

WHEREAS, the KLM has determined to initiate such a training program at the earliest possible date; and

WHEREAS, the KLM feels that concrete planning for such a program should begin immediately; and

WHEREAS, such planning will be meaningful only if there is assurance of the close cooperation and support of the BWM; Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the KLM ask the BWM to approve in principle the KLM plans for establishing a "Lutheran Theological Academy."

[2]KLM Minutes of Dec. 30, 1964 (64-48): "It was resolved that the KLM proceed to initiate the proposed LTA in 1965 and that Dr. Ji [Won Yong] be appointed as director of this program."

[3]KLM Minutes of 65-1 (January 7, 1965):

#### LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL ACADEMY

In working through the KLM's projections with Dr. Koppelman and Counselor Strege it was again brought out that the development of a theological training program is pivotal to the future of the Lutheran Church in Korea. Dr. Ji presented a study document on LTA which expanded and clarified the outline submitted to the BWM in March of 1964. Although the KLM recognizes the need to further clarify and define its plans and although it has received encouragement from the BWM in response to its LTA plan as submitted in March, 1964, it would like to have a further expression of the BWM's readiness to commit its full support to such a program. In order that necessary steps can be taken in negotiating agreements with the cooperating schools, in planning for the facilities, curriculum, etc., and in securing the required government approval, the KLM needs to have the assurance that it will receive the necessary moral and financial support to carry out the plan. Therefore

#### *Resolution 65-1*

BE IT RESOLVED that the KLM request the BWM to give its support in principle to the LTA plan for opening a theological training program in Korea by Fall of 1965.



of some of the study papers which I had prepared regarding the proposed LTA program.<sup>[4]</sup>

With the LTA plan, KLM aimed to undertake a theological training program in cooperation with the Theological College of Yonsei University in Seoul and its United Graduate School of Theology. The LTA was regarded as an interim program, for it was stated that "the ultimate goal is to develop a fully recognized first-rate theological institution in Korea" (from the study document of January 4-7, 1965). A comprehensive description of LTA was worked out, and a summary of references to LTA was appended to the KLM Minutes of July 2, 1965.<sup>[5]</sup> Furthermore, the "Regulations, 1966" of LTA was adopted (see Appendix E), and an "Agreement" between Yonsei University and KLM was likewise established for the LTA program. A comprehensive plan, which included a twenty-year projection, envisioned the development of facilities in two stages and called for a modest \$189,008 for facilities and 488 pyung (one pyung = 36 sq. feet) of land.

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[4] See Papers dated Feb. 16, 24, 17, 1964; March 7, 1964; January 4-7, 1965; some later notes dated January 13 and Jan. 28, 1965, which were discussed at the office of director Dr. Chung-Choon KIM of the United Graduate School of Theology at Yonsei University.

[5] Minutes of March 7, 1964, page 64-6, Resolution 64-3, and appendix report outlining the plan for a "Lutheran Theological Academy."

Minutes of June 6, 1964, page 64-22, 23: Discussion of objectives, recruitment, entrance requirements, and opening time schedule in response to questions from the Board.

Minutes of January 7, 1965, page 65-1, Resolution 65-1 asking for support in principle to the LTA plan, and appended study document on establishing the "Lutheran Theological Academy."

Minutes of February 20, 1965, page 65-9, regarding the use of one room in the Jedong building as the temporary quarters for the LTA program.

The LTA study document appended to the Minutes of January 7, 1965, provides the basic outline for developing further plans for establishing a theological training program. The materials in this report are to be regarded as supplementary to that study document (Also a report on LTA was appended to KLM Minutes, July 2, 1965, 8 pages).



The KLM established the LTA to help carry out its basic objectives, that is, of contributing to the building up of the Christian Church in Korea and of developing and sustaining congregations of Lutheran Christians. The specific objective of LTA was described as producing "ministers of Christ with the will and the skill to communicate the gospel in the church and to the world." The basic function was the training of workers for the church by providing theological training for full-time clergy, lay evangelists and other church workers. LTA recruited men with a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Theology degree and gave them a course of fifty-one semester credits (seventeen courses) in Lutheran theology over a four-year period. At the same time LTA students were enrolled at the College of Theology of Yonsei University and/or the United Graduate School of theology located on the Yonsei campus, and received their respective degrees from these institutions. This describes the regular route of LTA. In addition, a special course ("colloquy") provided for seminary graduates to study the LTA curriculum without enrolling as regular students at Yonsei University.

In order that students might gain practical experience during their term of study, the LTA (as Luther Seminary does today) administered a "field work" program in cooperation with local Lutheran congregations. Successful completion of the field work, which included assignments in the Sunday School, youth program, occasional preaching, etc., was a part of the requirement for graduation. Because of the nature of the LTA as a graduate program limited to a selected number of students, those enrolled at Yonsei University received a stipend covering their fees. They could also receive a field work scholarship to help with their living expenses.

Another function of LTA included a wider sharing of the Lutheran theological heritage through providing a professor for the United Graduate School of theology, producing theological

articles and books of relevance, and staging special theological lectures and conferences. Upon the completion of a formal contract between LTA and Yonsei University, I was assigned as a professor at the United Graduate School of Theology representing the LTA. Prior to this, I was a guest professor at the same school offering a course or two at a time.

Classroom and library facilities for LTA were first provided in the KLM's Jedong Building near the City Hall in Seoul. In 1967 the LTA got its own facilities in an old brick building on a piece of property which KLM had acquired on the southern slope of **Nam San** ("South Mountain") near Seoul's main railroad station. The property, consisting of two adjoining sites, was to provide a place for future theological training facilities as well as for a Lutheran "center." The somewhat larger space here enabled the LTA to build up its library, for which it had the goals of acquiring working tools for the basic theological disciplines and of developing a special section on works of Martin Luther and the Lutheran Reformation. In 1976 LTA moved to the new Lutheran Center (see Ch. XI. 2), where it occupied the entire second floor. When the evening program was added in 1980, a small dormitory was built on the same site to provide living and study space for the larger number of students.

Viewed from a wider, international perspective, the LTA was a unique venture. Under such an arrangement, the LTA could enjoy some of the advantages of being a part of a university, namely, academic recognition in the form of an academic degree for its students. Only in this way could a small denomination like the KLM afford to establish such an academic program. Furthermore, it takes a long time to develop an institution to the level of the governmental accreditation and licensing to issue a diploma and/or a degree in theology. On the other hand, the program had certain limitations and disadvantages, such as being under the university's general regulations and being unable to maintain the

curriculum entirely in accord with the special needs of the Lutheran church. At any rate, LTA continued to exist until the inauguration in 1980 of Luther Seminary, a new training program of the LCK.

## 2. Lutheran Servicemen's Memorial Library (LSML)

It may be appropriate to take up here a subject which has a story involving a good number of people. At the first conference meeting of the KLM on March 26, 1958, the very first Resolution was on a project known as the "Lutheran Servicemen's Memorial Library" (LSML) in Korea. Both interest and concern were evidenced in the resolution.<sup>[6]</sup> Then, an English daily in Korea, *The Korean Republic*, published a news item on May 5, 1958, p.8:

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[6] Minutes of Korea Lutheran Mission, March 26, 1958, page 2 with a Resolution:

"Kurt Voss reported to the conference that Dr. Ji has begun soliciting funds for a \$20,000.00 *Memorial Library* to be erected in Seoul in honor of American servicemen. Because this plan has not been officially presented through the office of the Board of Foreign Missions the merits or advisability of this project were not discussed. In as much as the conference was not informed on this project and its expressions were never requested the conference can foresee dangers when Christians undertake projects which affect the missionaries directly and their working for the safeguard of the principles to which they are committed. Therefore it is recommended to the Board:

### *Resolution 58-1*

"WHEREAS, the KLM is concerned that future misunderstandings do not arise between Christians in America and the missionaries in Korea and WHEREAS, the KLM is concerned that the immediate and future course of the mission be safeguarded and WHEREAS, coordination of all far-reaching projects, sponsorships and aid to the KLM must somehow be coordinated, be it therefore RESOLVED, that the Board of Foreign Missions give its reactions to this and similar proposals and direct the conference of the KLM as to what position it should take on this project."

**LIBRARY PLANNED AS MEMORIAL TO LUTHERAN HEROES:**  
The Lutheran Servicemen's Memorial Library in Korea will soon be established "as a memorial to the Lutheran servicemen who assisted the brave and self-sacrificing Koreans in their struggle to maintain their freedom." The project, assisted by Lutherans in the United States, will be handled by three Lutheran Church missionaries presently working in Korea. Dr. Won Yong JI, who is presently serving as assistant pastor of Jehovah Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn., will soon return to Korea to work with the American missionaries. Necessary books and funds will be supplied by a committee formed in the United States to implement the program. The idea of the establishment was first conceived by Dr. Ji in 1951, when he was given \$300 by American Lutheran soldiers in Korea for use in his education.

At the library of Luther Seminary at Shingal, Korea, one may find many volumes stamped with "LSML Memorial Library." The project actually originated just prior to Christmas 1951 when I received \$300 from Lutheran GIs in Korea in the midst of severe battles at that time. This money was collected at small communion services which were conducted over a period of several months in Seoul, Inchon, Taegu, Pusan and ASCOM City. On behalf of the servicemen, the LCMS chaplain, Rev. Martin H. Kretzschmar, wrote me a letter with a check to "use for your education to prepare yourself to help your countrymen in the future years. . ." For me it was a heart-touching experience to receive such an unexpected gift from the American servicemen at war in my homeland. I decided to set aside the money for a small but worthwhile cause of a more meaningful nature than the payment for my meal tickets on the campus of Concordia Seminary. I conceived the idea of establishing a library to commemorate their service in Korea. After that I spoke about it to people and at churches whenever I had time and opportunity. During the course

of my life since then, the project has gone through ups and downs, sometimes forgotten and then remembered again. At the start, the intention of the project seemed to be misunderstood, chiefly due to my inexperience in handling the matter. I should have consulted earlier and in more detail the BFM and my American missionary colleagues before their departure for Korea in December 1957. At any rate, a modest sum of funds and some used books were gathered and sent to Korea, and contributed to the library of LCK's theological training program.<sup>[7]</sup>

In connection with the LSML project, it seems to be enlightening to quote a passage taken from a letter from Prof. William J. Danker to Missionary Kurt E. Voss, then the chairman of KLM, dated July 10, 1958. (I am grateful to Dr. Danker for sharing the copy with me which I was not aware of before beginning to write this monograph.) Evidently Dr. Danker had received a letter from Missionary Voss dated June 5, expressing

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[7] A considerable number of things were written about the LSML in early 1958. An administrative and an advisory committee were organized with some 16 prominent Lutheran church leaders, including men like Victor Bartling, Thomas Coates, W. J. Danker, Oswald Hoffmann, and H. H. Koppelman, with their permission, and the purpose and procedure of the project were outlined. A revised statement on the LSML project was prepared on July 5, 1958. At the same time, a release of the story was made. I wrote these in consultation with my former colleague, Rev. Ernest R. Drews, then the pastor of Jehovah Ev. Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minn, and the chairman of the Administrative Committee of LSML. In 1964 Rev. Paul Bartling wrote a comprehensive description of LSML, Jedong Building and the future Lutheran seminary program under the title: "LUTHERAN SERVICEMEN'S MEMORIAL LIBRARY IN KOREA." From time to time, LSML was mentioned at KLM conference meetings, such as on February 16, 1959; January 5, 1965 (page 11), etc. The above materials can be found in the KLM files, the Concordia Historical Institute "Korea file," and my personal file. Also reports were made in *Minnesota Lutheran*, May 1958; *The Lutheran Layman*, April and May 1958 with mission supplementary copies. Also see Rev. Paul Strege's NOTES on Korea Visit, May 7-10, 1963, p. 2 and KLM Minutes, March 7, 1960 and 65-24.

either his personal or the collective concern of the KLM missionaries vis-à-vis the LSML library project and, perhaps more significantly, the general question of relationship with me. This quotation may shed some light on my remarks elsewhere in this writing to the effect that it took quite a while for me to get the full confidence and support of the BFM/LCMS as well as of my missionary colleagues on the field, which is in fact nothing unusual in normal circumstances. To trust a human being takes time, and ordinarily it may take much more time and effort to establish a satisfactory understanding and confidence at the cross-cultural level. It is a coincidence that mention is made in the letter of the name of my esteemed friend and former colleague for two years when I was the Asia Secretary of LWF, the sainted Bishop Rajah Bhushanam Manikam (1897-1970) of India. Bishop Manikam of Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, according to my recollection of his remarks, had a similar problem of getting understanding from his Western colleagues. The letter reads:

Thank you for your kind letter of June 5 [1958]. I certainly endeavored to do everything I could to get the library project [Lutheran Servicemen's Memorial Library] onto as sound a basis as possible. I think it should be possible to eliminate the undesirable features and to concentrate on those aspects which would make a genuine contribution to the cause. I was greatly heartened by Ji's response. He favored me with a carbon copy of his letter to you in which he placed the entire project before you for whatever action you men deemed best. This would indicate that Ji is amenable to reason and I think it offers much promise for your future good relations with him. I am sure he will argue loud and long for his viewpoint but will, I believe, ultimately go along if he is convinced that he cannot carry the day. I can understand the misgivings you had about getting along with Ji in the future. I am sure there will be problems. At the same time I do not think that they need to necessarily be of an insuperable nature. And the mere fact that he had the initiative and ingenuity to get this library started is also a plus for him in a certain respect

even though he went about it in the wrong way. You know how easily missionaries in the past have gathered around themselves docile and obsequious individuals who have neither spine nor brains. Initiative and ability are rare commodities. Ji has demonstrated that he possesses these qualities. If they can be channeled properly, you will have a very valuable member of your team, it seems to me. To paraphrase Bishop Manikam, here Ji's weakness as exhibited in this library project is also his strength. It is my prayer that your conference in Korea will provide Ji with a restraint on his impulsiveness but a channel for his diversities. May He richly bless your fellowship with him and his with you.[July 10, 1958] [s/William Danker]

### **3. Luther Seminary: a new venture for the LCK**

The process which led to the founding of Luther Seminary began in 1980 when the LTA program, described above, was augmented by opening a theological evening college designed to accommodate particularly those who held jobs during the day. Already in the first semester, the night school enrolled fifteen students, while the earlier LTA program had three students. However, both of these programs would later be phased out as the new Luther Seminary phased in.

Then, later in 1980 the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea took action requiring that all theological schools and seminaries meet its standard requirements. The Ministry controls and supervises all educational institutions in Korea. However, more or less without its knowledge, some hundred and eighty "unrecognized" (**mu-in-ka**) theological schools and seminaries of various denominations had sprung up around Korea, most without adequate facilities or qualified teaching staff. Because the LTA did not have academic licensing from the Ministry of Education, it was classified with the "unrecognized" institutions (cf. *Korea Times*, 11-19-1980, 6-14-1981).

After intense negotiation, the Ministry of Education, which supervises all educational institutions in Korea, gave the LCK

permission to proceed with establishing a theological seminary under the prescribed requirements of the government. At that time, only seven out of those 180 institutions got permission to continue. One of the conditions was that the LCK should locate the school outside of the city of Seoul, since the government was not permitting more colleges in this already crowded city. Another condition was that it had to acquire the new site before the end of December 1981. This meant that the LCK had only fourteen months time to make use of the precious permission acquired from the government. It was estimated that approximately two million dollars was needed for land, the necessary buildings, and facilities in order to accommodate the new program under the governmental regulations.

At this critical juncture, the LCK made an urgent appeal to its partner church in the United States, the LCMS, and to the Lutheran World Federation, of which the LCK was a member. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod took quick action to assure its support when the LCK faced this "crisis" in its seminary program.

Such a bold step taken by the LCMS and its leadership was very significant, in my estimation, for it was a clear indication of their confidence in the LCK and its leadership. Throughout the years preceding, the KLM/LCK was able to establish by the help of God the one most important thing before their friends overseas: **credibility**. This was no small achievement for the Korean national leadership and the expatriate colleagues (missionaries) who had handled mission funds and followed through on a variety of projects and programs. They did well what they had promised their friends and supporters in America and elsewhere. Perhaps no single overseas project had ever called for such a large sum of money. With mutual trust and confidence, the urgent need was presented to the Lutheran friends in North America; and they responded with quick and positive action. The LCMS as a church body as well as its Concordia Seminary in St. Louis gave assurance



of their cooperation and support. Such confidence was also evident on the part of the LWF member churches when they likewise showed their whole-hearted support for the cause of Luther Seminary in Korea at the meeting of the Commission on Church Cooperation in June 1981 in Chicago, Illinois. Upon LCK's instruction I attended the meeting.

A careful search for land culminated in the purchase of some twenty-five acres of hilly land south of Seoul, within eyeshot of the main Seoul-Pusan expressway and very close to a major interchange — well located for commuting students and near the well-known Korean Folk Village. Funds from the "Forward in Remembrance" offering of the LCMS were allocated to purchase the site and to begin construction of the first building. Not long after, additional funds were provided by the LCMS and the Lutheran Women's Missionary League toward the construction of a hundred-student dormitory and a row house with seven faculty apartments (see *LCMS Reporter*, Sept. 3, 1984). Ground-breaking for the main building of Luther Seminary was held on March 30, 1983. The main building of the seminary, which includes classrooms, library, chapel-auditorium and administrative offices, was made ready for the first class of students in the school year which began in March 1984. The dormitory and faculty houses were completed in 1985.

The academic plan of Luther Seminary includes two levels of study: a four-year "theological college" followed by a two-year "graduate program." The college level program is open to all students, including both men and women, and provides for a total enrollment of about a hundred and sixty students. Career options include evangelist, parish worker, pastoral ministry (after advanced study) and other fields. The two year graduate program accepts only students who wish to prepare for the pastoral ministry in the Lutheran Church in Korea. Candidates come primarily from the Luther Seminary college-level course, although

students with a bachelor's degree from other schools are also accepted into a three-year program. The future goal is to upgrade this program to a regular Master of Divinity course.

Essential to the successful implementation of the seminary academic plan is development of the faculty. An able group of Korean pastors and expatriate missionaries make up the current teaching staff.<sup>[8]</sup> Faculty members have chances to pursue further graduate study, in Korea or abroad, with the help of a scholarship program. Cultural courses at the college level are taught by guest instructors from other colleges and universities.

Another noteworthy step was taken on January 18, 1986, when Luther Seminary received academic recognition (**hak-ryuk-in-ka**) of its college-level program from the Ministry of Education of the Korean government (**Hak-Moo** 25210-55). This is only one step short of becoming a fully accredited 'college' with permission to grant a recognized degree. Already now this recognition means that Luther Seminary graduates are qualified to enroll at Korean graduate schools upon passing entrance examination. Thus it marks a significant step forward for the long range development of Luther Seminary.

Luther Seminary holds great potential for the future of the LCK, a relatively young "vibrant" church body with a strong commitment to evangelistic outreach throughout the Korean peninsula and with long range thinking on the possibility of mission to North Korea, the China mainland and other neighboring areas of East Asia. <sup>[9]</sup> For the planning and

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[8]The following faculty were approved by the Ministry of Education (College 1041.5-6861 April 11, 1984, all new appointments): Maynard Dorow, president (previously approved); Won-Yong JI, professor; Hae-Chul KIM, assistant professor; Sun-Hoi KIM, assistant professor; Hilbert Riemer, assistant professor; David Susan, assistant professor; Hyun-Sup UM, instructor; Sung-Wan PARK, instructor.

[9]Some day it may become possible to do mission work in the People's

development of the Seminary, the special efforts and contributions of Missionary Maynard Dorow and President Won-Sang JI of the LCK should be noted. Furthermore, the cooperation, support, and encouragement of the following persons cannot be forgotten: Drs. Jacob A. O. Preus, Ralph Bohlmann, Edward A. Westcott, Jr., Louis Y. Nau, and Karl L. Barth. On the local Korean scene, we also recognize the faithful service to Luther Seminary of Mr. Jae-Rok KIM (now retired in the USA) and Mr. Moon-Shin PARK, the longtime senior administrator of the KLM/LCK. Indeed, these men did more than their respective duties.

#### **4. Cross-Cultural Programs**

Two programs of Luther Seminary call for particular notice here. One is a cross-cultural "student exchange" between Luther Seminary and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. It began in the spring of 1986 when three American M. Div. students from Concordia came to Luther Seminary for a regular term of study. Again in 1987 two more Concordia students spent the spring term at Luther Seminary. The program is designed to give American students a cross-cultural experience away from their usual setting and the religious tradition of the West. The objectives for the visiting students were set forth as follows:

- to enlarge his vision of the church and its mission;
- to enhance his ability to understand and to respond

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Republic of China and also in North Korea when the long awaited reunification of the Korean nation becomes a reality (or at least when the North becomes a more open society). The present writer recognizes the good intentions of some fellow Lutherans in America, including Revs. Gus Schultz, Paul Wee, and Will Herzfeld, who visited North Korea a few years ago to explore church contacts. However, knowing the complexity of the South-North relations over past decades, the outlook may not be as optimistic as some outsiders seem to think.

- meaningfully to people of another culture; and
- to magnify his skills for ministering in today's rapidly changing world.

The same objectives apply in varying degrees to the Korean students of Luther Seminary. Furthermore, the presence of the American students on the Luther Seminary campus is a source of stimulation and encouragement for the Korean students.

The reactions to and evaluation of the program for the first two groups of American students from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis have been favorable. So it is likely that the program will continue in a similar pattern. Furthermore, the Seminary envisions that students from other theological institutions of partner churches in the West and in Asia may also be invited to participate in the program in the future.

Beginning in the fall of 1986, Luther Seminary has also hosted one or two undergraduate students from St. Olaf College in Minnesota under St. Olaf's Study/Service Program. They work out an academic program of tutorial studies under the guidance of Luther Seminary professors. The service component of their program is normally teaching English conversation to the students of Luther Seminary.

The second program is a "Professor Exchange Program" between Luther Seminary in Korea and other Lutheran seminaries overseas. This plan was initiated by Luther Seminary; and with the kind cooperation and support of the BMS/LCMS it is being implemented. Under this program I have been "commuting" between Concordia Seminary and Luther Seminary, beginning with the 1984-85 academic year. Since Concordia Seminary, where I have been on the professorial staff since July 1978, uses a quarter system and Luther Seminary uses a semester system, I continue to teach two-thirds of the academic year at Concordia while teaching one semester each year, or half-time, at Luther Seminary. Under this arrangement I am considered as one

full professor of Luther Seminary according to the requirements of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea. At the same time I continue as part of the regular teaching faculty at Concordia Seminary. The total annual cost for my work is divided by the two seminaries as agreed by both parties. This is a good example of cooperation between seminaries in the East and in the West as partners in Christ; and for me it is a privilege and honor, though physically somewhat demanding, to participate in such a unique arrangement. Under this program, I can utilize the in-put from Korea in America, and vice versa. It is a rewarding and enriching experience, both spiritually and professionally. This same exchange program, furthermore, provides for a regular program of visiting professors from Lutheran seminaries abroad to Luther Seminary. The financial arrangements for these programs are made possible through the "Forward in Remembrance" funds which represent the interest and concern of many Lutheran Christians in the USA and Canada for the great commission of our Lord.<sup>[10]</sup>

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[10] *LCMS Reporter*, January 23, 1984, p. 1.

[11] Cf. the LCMS-sponsored Theological Education Conference at Baguio City, Philippines, 1964. Also see the papers and reports related to the feasibility study of the proposal known as "Asia Center for Advanced Studies" (=ACAS; later changed to APAS, and still later named APATS) in the LWF in 1971-74. Especially note the following two documents: 1) "Progress Report on Asia Center for Advanced Studies Feasibility Study" (cf. CCC/LWF AGENDA 1972, EXHIBIT VII, 105pp.), carried out by Won-Yong Ji in compliance with instructions given by the CCC/LWF and the Commission on Studies of LWF, dated May 1972; 2) "Report on the Proposal known as 'Asia Center for Advanced Studies'" prepared by Dr. Martin L. Kretzmann (cf. CCC/LWF AGENDA 1973, EXHIBIT J, 49pp.). The subject "ACAS" (later "APAS") occurs in the AGENDAs of the meetings of the Commission on Church Cooperation and the Commission on Studies of the LWF from 1972 to 1975, and also appears occasionally after 1975. All these materials are in the file of the present writer and the LWF Archive.

The future may see more creative and imaginative programs initiated and implemented by Luther Seminary for its own development and for the benefit of partners throughout the world who have similar interest and tasks. Likewise, it is my personal hope that one of my long-cherished dreams of establishing a graduate school of theology under the sponsorship of the Lutherans in Asia<sup>[11]</sup> may materialize some day within the complex of Luther Seminary.

## **Part Four**

# **Lutheranism in a Reformed Land**

## Chapter XIV

### The Lutheran Contribution

During 1984-85 the Korean Protestant world celebrated its centennial with many special events and programs. Even the relatively young and small LCK contributed to this historic occasion through its president who served as one of the co-chairmen of the Centennial Committee. Various centennial reports clearly noted that one of the significant happenings in the century's history was the arrival of the Lutherans in Korea, including Karl Gützlaff in 1832, and the formation of Korea Lutheran Mission in 1958.<sup>[1]</sup> The significance of Karl Gützlaff's visit in 1832 was also noted, although it is seldom recognized that he was a Lutheran.

As alluded to previously, the Lutheran constituency in Korea is like a cup of water poured out in the desert — only a few thousand in the midst of nearly ten million<sup>[2]</sup> Protestants and Roman Catholics. At times it takes some nerve to talk about the Lutherans in Korea. Despite such odds, this autonomous church body, the LCK, is “small in numbers but big in outreach” and a “vibrant church” in the midst of many large Christian denominations and traditional religions of Korea. The church as a whole may be frequently conscious of its small size, but seldom suffers an

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[1] Young-Hun LEE, *op. cit.*, pp. 383, 399. Also see the materials related to the centennial celebration, “50 Events in 100 Years of Protestantism,” *Chosun Ilbo*, 1984.

[2] Not infrequently, the statistics regarding the numbers of Christians are inconsistent.



inferiority complex. It takes pride in being the heir of the Reformation of Martin Luther and maintains the dignity of an "elder brother" of Protestantism and tries to live up to such esteem. This can be partly evidenced in a decision made in 1958 when the newly organized KLM was trying to state its basic objectives, namely: not to be theologically indiscreet, nor interested in "sheep stealing."<sup>[3]</sup> This has been the general spirit of KLM throughout the years, even to this date. How to be a small but significant "plus" to the existing Christian churches in Korea was a higher priority than how to establish quickly another impressive denomination under the name "Lutheran." A supportive but distinctly Lutheran presence has been the desired aim rather than simply adding another denomination to compete with the many churches already existing in Korea.<sup>[4]</sup>

This policy was a unique and advanced approach to missions. Instead of the traditional view of missions which concentrates on the starting of so many new churches and their statistical growth, KLM chose a more comprehensive notion of mission which aimed to reach as many people as possible with the gospel through programs that complemented the work of existing churches. This approach has had certain consequences: negatively, there is limited growth of the Lutheran constituency as a denomination; positively, there is a wider sharing of the gospel with people, a good image of the Lutherans in Korea, a cordial relationship with other denominations, and a united Lutheran church — having avoided splinter groups among the Lutherans.

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[3] KLM Minutes, October 25, 1958, p. 1.

[4] This approach has been a debated point, then and now, among many Christians including Lutherans. Instead of the traditional view of missions concentrating on statistical growth and the starting of so many new churches, KLM held to a more comprehensive notion of missions reaching as many people as possible with the Gospel without denominational accent.

However, having established the wider approach through the use of mass media and Bible study programs, the LCK later set about to establish a viable Lutheran Church as well. The latest revision of the LCK's long range plan has established a goal of planting some 56 new churches by 1997, in addition to the 21 already established. So the small LCK is now working determinedly to carry out both approaches — the so-called “A” and “B” approaches which were delineated through careful thought and planning in the early years.

## **1 . Lutherans among Korean Christians (Cf. Ch. II, 4)**

Protestantism in Korea may be characterized by and large as being “Reformed” in its origin and nature. Calvinism still plays a dominant role, even though in recent years there appears to be some kind of mixture in theology and practice. The old Princetonian conservatism permeated deep into Korean Protestantism through many conservative missionaries in the early years of missions in Korea. Although there is a strong liberal and activistic segment in Korean Protestantism today, it is in general conservative in theology and more traditional in church life and ministry. A new type of syncretism with Korean traditional shamanism is increasingly visible and obvious.

In recent years, pentecostal and charismatic tendencies have become widely prevalent, not only among the traditional Pentecostal Church bodies, the Assemblies of God, the Holiness Church, and the fast growing “Full-Gospel Church,” but also among the mainline Presbyterian and Methodist churches throughout the land.

Not infrequently, Calvinism and Armenianism are intermingled. In seminary class rooms Calvinism may be taught, but in church practice Armenianism may be more noticeable. Many Protestant Christians exhibit a faith and practice of religion that is very

emotional at both private and corporate levels.

One cannot say that the Lutherans, both lay believers and pastors, are not affected by this situation. This is no small concern today in the Lutheran Church. Occasionally one hears the tempter's voice: If one desires numerical growth of the church, he must either put up a "Presbyterian" signboard on the church or engage in pentecostal and charismatic practices in the ministry. The "temptation" is not imagined. It is a real test for the Lutheran workers in Korea who are struggling to build worshipping communities.

The situation can be seen either as a threat or as a unique opportunity for making a "Lutheran" contribution. The time has come to look seriously at "Lutheran spirituality," carefully viewed in theology and in practice. The spirituality question is at the heart of all religious propagation. The Lutherans in Korea and elsewhere, it seems, have not yet passed a stage of generality and superficiality in handling the "spirituality" of the human being, especially for our time.

## 2. Luther and His Thought

A most significant aspect of the Lutheran contribution to Korean Christendom has been the Reformation theology of Martin Luther, interpreted for the present time in the Korean context. Especially accented in that theology have been the subjects of the Holy Scripture, God's grace and faith, the concept and practice of the "universal priesthood of all believers," the clear distinction between Law and Gospel, and the understanding of Two Kingdoms, to mention a few. The KLM/LCK has been keenly aware of this special role in Korea. Since the very beginning of the work in Korea, as KLM was outlining its programs, this area of "contribution" was kept in mind by giving special attention to Luther and his thought.

In size and scope, the Lutheran work in this area is still small in light of the enormous need prevailing in Korea. However, it can be considered a significant beginning. As a member of the church, I too have given my personal interest and made a modest effort in promoting this important aspect of the Lutheran work.

My long-cherished dream of introducing Martin Luther and his thoughts to Korea<sup>[5]</sup> through his own writings was realized in 1980 when LCK's Concordia Press began publishing a Korean Edition of Luther's Works. When completed in 1989, the Edition will consist of twelve volumes, each containing 500 to 650 pages. Generous financial support for this momentous project has come from the **Missionswerk** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany. Also, the project has enjoyed the cooperation of Concordia Seminary which has facilitated my spending time in Korea each year to carry on the work of general editor of the Edition.

One of the first steps in editorial preparation for the Edition was preparing vocabulary lists to ensure accuracy and consistency in translation by the various translators. Much meticulous effort was invested in order to make Luther, who wrote in sixteenth-century German, speak in understandable Korean at the end of the 20th century.

The next and perhaps most difficult task was selecting and organizing the writings of Luther to be included in the Edition. After much careful consideration, the projected series was laid out

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[5] My first effort at translating Luther's work was his Small Catechism in the summer of 1952 (cf. *St. Paul Dispatch*, Aug. (date?) 1952, and the Sunday bulletins of Jehovah Ev. Lutheran Church, St. Paul, in 1952). Next I translated some of Luther's writings for publication after I returned to Korea in 1958. In 1967, a comprehensive plan for producing a Korean Edition of Luther's Works was made, but it had to be postponed due to my departure for Geneva in July 1968. The plan was then revived in 1977 while I was in Neuendettelsau, Germany.

in three sections which are relevant to Luther's thought: 1) Luther and the Holy Scripture; 2) Luther and Theology; 3) Luther and Ministry. The first section contains two volumes on the Old Testament and another two volumes on the New Testament, one of which is Luther's commentary on Romans. The second section includes three volumes of Luther's Reformation writings. The third section has five volumes under the titles "Pastor for the Church," "Pastor for the World," "Luther the Preacher," "Luther the Counselor," and "Luther the Communicator."

It is a privilege to serve as general editor of the Korean Edition of Luther's Works, supervising translation and doing a considerable amount of translating myself, checking all the translated manuscripts and doing the final proofreading. This project should be of great benefit to the whole church in Korea through the increased exposure to the writings of the Reformer. The published volumes have received many favorable comments and words of encouragement in numerous positive reviews.<sup>[6]</sup>

One of the priority tasks of the KLM/LCK has been to introduce Luther and his thought to Korea—a Lutheran presence through Luther himself at both popular and scholarly levels. In carrying out this task over the past thirty years, the LCK has published numerous books and articles — now capped by an edition of Luther's own writings.

### 3. Lutheran Identity

In the midst of a "Reformed land," one may rightly say, the presence of "Lutheranism" as such may have a certain significance

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[6] For the publication of the Korea Edition of Luther's works, cf. *Concordia Journal*, May 1982, pp. 81f.: "Luther Speaks Korean" written by W.Y. Ji. Also see the writing of Rev. Richard Pfaff in *LW Information*, 30/85, pp. 11f.; *Lutherische Monatshefte*, 24. Jahrgang. Sept. '85, p. 427: "Luther auf Koreanisch;" and *Focus*, Concordia Seminary, Summer 1985, pp.1f.

for Protestantism in general, and for Catholicism as well. It is not easy or comfortable to be a small minority; nevertheless, a minority may at times play an indispensable role, especially in a time of crisis and confusion. By maintaining its own clear identity, the struggle of the Lutherans in Korea may serve as a good model for other denominations as they try to be authentic Christians living in the midst of many traditional religions of the land. The Lutherans in Korea, in my estimation, believe in the importance of historic Christianity and its standard creeds and confessions. They take the identity question seriously: the general Christian identity in Korea, and the specific Lutheran identity among Christian denominations. This leads us to another concern for identity in the midst of a constantly changing context of life.

Creeds and confessions with classical value should be treated seriously. This is especially true where there are many so-called confessional churches but in actuality have no definite historical confessions. A true confession is more than a relevant statement for a particular period of time. A confession must first of all have Biblical relevance and speak to the universal questions and problems of the people and their salvation. Such historical treasures as the Ecumenical Creeds and the Augsburg Confession should be considered accordingly. Our age needs confession, namely, confessing what the church of all times has confessed. The LCK believes in the supreme importance of the historical Lutheran confessions (cf. Appendix D).

The Lutherans in Korea have been true to their identity and confession also when carrying out their tasks in the wider arena. We have described how LCK has made imaginative use of electronic and printed media for nation-wide evangelistic outreach and have promoted Bible study among all Christians through the Bethel Series. These programs, too, have been confessional in the best sense of being gospel-centered and faithful to the Biblical and ecumenical doctrines of the church. The same kind of "confession"



is made through the LCK's Luther Seminary, where the college-level program is open to Christians of all denominations, as well as through LCK leadership roles in inter-denominational settings such as the Korean Christian Leaders Association.

#### **4. The LCK and World Christendom**

Finally, the LCK's participation in certain activities of world Lutheranism should not be overlooked. The LCK has been a member of the LWF since 1972, while its closest partner in the United States, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and some other partner churches in the world are not. The LCK's interest in the LWF membership stemmed from both practical and theological concerns. It would lend status to the fledgling LCK in Korea and it would open up opportunities for sharing and communicating with other Lutherans, especially in Asia. It could also best carry out the Lutheran confessional commitment by taking every opportunity to confess in an open and positive manner. In subsequent years these points have been proven in many instances. One good example would be the occurrence at the LWF Seventh Assembly in July 22-August 5, 1984, in Budapest, Hungary, when the question of "Pulpit and Altar Fellowship" among LWF member churches came up. Although the issue was finally passed by the majority who favored it, the Korean delegation represented by the LCK's president voiced clear opposition citing a number of valid reasons.<sup>[7]</sup> On numerous other occasions, the LCK has made contributions to world Lutheranism as well as learning from various Lutheran traditions without any weakening of its theological conviction or its church

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[7] Agenda, LWF Seventh Assembly, July 22 — Aug. 5, 1984, Budapest, Hungary, p. 3, Exhibit 9.3.6. NAPROL NAPRA, VII. 31, p. 3. The LCMS *Reporter*, August 20, 1984, p. 3. Also see Appendix F.

autonomy.

Describing the "Lutheran contribution" to Korea can be a very difficult task. For a more comprehensive and objective assessment we have to wait another generation or two. As I write this monograph, I clearly see my limitation in this regard at this juncture of history. For interested readers, I append four descriptions of KLM/LCK written over a period of some thirty years (cf. Documentation VII).



## Chapter XV

### Looking Forward to the 21st Century

#### 1. Challenge and Aspiration

We are now approaching the twenty-first century. This fact alone gives us valid reason to reflect on some serious questions and to prepare accordingly for the future. We are apprehensive as to what may happen in the world and what kind of challenges the LCK as a church body may eventually have to face. There will be many new developments, no doubt, especially in religions, in the church, in the world economy and technology, and in international relations. To illustrate: We are no longer driving on a single lane. Four or five lanes move in the same direction. To be a safe driver, one has to know not only what is going on in his own lane but also what is happening in the other lanes. It is increasingly important to know oneself **and** others.

The challenges to the LCK on its thirtieth anniversary in 1988 are great and diverse, coming from all imaginable directions. This is a time when the church body as a whole should hold up high aspirations and realistic dreams while striving for the utmost cooperation among its leaders and local congregations. The future is bright. As I see it now, the LCK has great potential in its leadership and resources. Relationships with its partners throughout the world have been mutually cordial, productive and edifying. The Lutherans in Korea have been endeavoring not only to preserve the unique tradition of historical Lutheranism, both in theology and in ministry, but also to respond to new challenges and situations without stumbling into any pitfall or transient fads.

The LCK should continue its areas of contribution through the

effective use of mass media, and also with new urgency cultivate and expand its evangelistic work and social service ministry through its members and local congregations. For some time to come, the LCK may still have to struggle with the difficult questions of why it does not grow as fast as other denominations at the congregational level, what its evangelistic strategy and methods should be, and how the Lutheran church can be more deeply rooted into Korea in the midst of many large Protestant denominations with older traditions and greater resources. To my mind, the LCK need make no apology for its past. What it needs most at this point of history is to look at the past contextually, to assess the present realistically, and to implement its plans courageously. These questions call for a mobilization of the members of the Lutheran fellowship in Korea with a firm faith and conviction in God's promise through His Word and the Sacraments. Let us encourage each other, the leaders and members of the LCK, to initiate and develop new programs for the furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ among the many non-churched people of our nation. For sure, the task calls for imaginative thinking and courageous involvement and commitment by all members of the LCK.

The challenge is not limited to the southern part of the peninsula. It extends to North Korea and to the large Korean population in the People's Republic of China. The LCK has been engaged on a limited scale in such mission beyond South Korea through the Korea Lutheran Hour programs. But the opportunities in the future will be much greater and will require the utmost effort of Lutherans in Korea in cooperation with other Christians possessing a similar concern for missions.

In order to carry out its mission task to the fullest, the LCK should develop closer relationships with the Lutheran churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America, while also maintaining its historically unique partnership with the LCMS. Also, special

partnership relationships with other churches, such as the Lutheran Church of Australia and the **Missionswerk** of Neuendettelsau in Germany, should be pursued thoughtfully. One would hope that the **Missionswerk** will continue to sponsor its "Seminar on the Reformation and the Reformation Church" which has been of such great benefit for church leaders of Asia and Africa.<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2. Growth and Consolidation

As we envisage the long future of the LCK, I think of the importance of internal consolidation within the LCK. As it grows larger, both in numbers and in the scope of its programs, internal solidarity may easily be loosened by various factors. Therefore, predicting the future of LCK may mean a prediction of its future leadership. The LCK will largely be conditioned by its leadership: from the head of the church body to its executive committee members, seminary faculty, and local congregational pastors. For a church body which is yet largely constituted by leaders who transferred from other Christian denominations to the Lutheran confession,

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[1] This program was originally initiated by me, while I was in Germany, with the cooperation of the president of the Taiwan Lutheran Church, Rev. Peter CHU, and president Won-Sang JI of LCK who were visiting Neuendettelsau in the summer of 1977. It was subsequently adopted, supported and conducted each year for two months starting from summer 1979 by the MISSIONSWERK of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria, Germany. Many Asian church leaders and theologians, as well as many from other continents, benefitted from the program. From the LCK the following persons have so far participated at different times: Sun-Hoi KIM, Sung-Wan PARK, Won-Sang JI, Hae-Chul KIM, Eun-Kyu CHO; Missionary David J. Susan as a staff assistant; and Won-Yong JI as the program coordinator of the inaugural seminar in summer 1979. Related materials are in the files of *Missionswerk* in Neuendettelsau as well as in Won-Yong JI's personal files. See JI's first memorandum on the subject, dated July 6, 1977, addressed to Director Horst Becker.

the "Lutheran identity" question may continue to be a deep concern, especially in the midst of all types of religious practices today and where the traditional mainline Protestant denominations and the Pentecostal and charismatic church bodies are somehow intermingled. How to navigate the Lutheran vessel in the strong currents of Korean Protestantism, and how to keep the direction straight in the religious whirlpool and jungle of Korea without losing the Lutheran identity and yet make some significant contributions to Korean Christendom and to society — these are the responsibilities as well as the burdens of Korean Lutherans today as they look forward to the next century. There is a way, I am confident.

However, it is not easy to keep alert along the way, while remaining productive and joyful. Avoiding any internal strife, jealousy, and unnecessary competition, which can be mutually harmful and counter-productive, is very important. Encouraging cooperation, harmony and unity among Lutherans in Korea may be the top priority item in the coming years. We have learned the truth of these sentiments through three decades of experience.

In the mission of God, person meets person and mind meets mind. In this process, relationships have supreme importance. It signifies togetherness in work, mutuality in action and purpose, and trust and confidence in dealing with one other. Relationships in the area of Christian mission are affected by several things, namely: understanding the issues, the manner of interpersonal encounter, the art of communication and sound theology. Recognizing this, we should first respect one another's role and mutually build each other up in the spirit of Christ, have a proper attitude toward each other, and work in a cooperative partnership for mutual complementarity.

There can be no great general without brave soldiers. Teamwork is essential. Solidarity does not come about through rhetoric; there must be mutual give-and-take. When the people

and their leaders dedicate their intelligence, love for one another, talents and personality to the service of Jesus Christ, the entire church can move forward with optimism. We are called to work **together** in God's mission.

### **3. The Unfinished Task**

This story of Lutheranism in Korea is still unfinished. It tells only the beginning, how the early pioneers of KLM began the work and how the first generation Lutherans in Korea are continuing that work. Therefore, no attempt can be made to bring this writing to a conclusion. The work of God in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ will go on continuously through the Lutherans and other Christians in Korea. At this juncture of history, some assessment of the past may help us to understand where we are and where we should be heading in missions in this "Land of the Morning Calm." From this point of view, this publication may be legitimately called only an "introduction" to the topic which we originally proposed — A History of Lutheranism in Korea.

### **4. The "Ji Brothers"**

My brother Won-Sang<sup>[2]</sup> and I have sometimes been on the receiving end of envy, jealousy and misunderstanding. In the early years, until 1968 when I left Korea for Geneva, mostly I alone received criticism, but since then both of us. Some people who had hoped to get into the KLM turned out to be unreasonable critics, occasionally spreading unfounded rumors. The case of a certain

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[2] Won-Sang Ji, my younger brother, also fled to South Korea in 1947 from the communist-occupied North. He has been the president of the LCK since 1970. A talented man, he has made significant contributions to the development of the LCK and has done important work for Korean Christendom in general.

Kwon was one of them.<sup>[3]</sup> Some of them had assumed that I was handling all the KLM funds from overseas and did whatever I wished to do with them, thus becoming rich. From the inception

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[3] The background of Mr. Gunnar Sun-Duk KWON and his relation to the KLM is described by Rev. Paul Bartling in a letter to Dr. Carl W. Segerhammer, then the president of Pacific Southwest Synod of the Lutheran Church in America. The letter, dated May 13, 1971, reads in part as follows:

"Briefly viewed, Mr. Kwon and his parents were brought into the Lutheran church by Swedish missionaries when they were residing in Manchuria during the Japanese occupation [of Korea]. This [sic] fall Mr. Kwon first came to the attention of our church when he made inquiries concerning our theological training program. Mr. Kwon was not interested in pursuing the Lutheran ministry via our intensive theological training program and subsequently established a fellowship in Suwon, called the Augustana Lutheran Church. Mr. Kwon is not ordained and does not carry the credentials of a Lutheran. In order to seek recognition and support for his program he has embarked on an ambitious overseas letter-writing campaign and to achieve his ends is trying to bring discredit to the Korean Lutheran Church, its objectives, programs, theological stance and personnel . . ."

Mr. Kwon had written a letter (in Korean) dated January 19, 1971, to Rev. Paul Strege, East Asia Secretary of the BFM/LCMS in St. Louis which was filled with accusations, inaccurate information and flawed judgments. He wrote, for instance, "Those who have spoiled KLM are the Ji's family and Revs. Paul Bartling and Hilbert Riemer. I suggest you to come to Korea and examine them to call them back or discharge them from their works." In response to Mr. Kwon's maledictory letter, Rev. Strege responded officially on May 28, 1971, in an open letter which was widely circulated in America and sent also to Sweden and to the LWF in Geneva. That letter follows in its entirety.

May 28, 1971

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: Mr. Gunnar Kwon

This note is being shared with persons who may be contacted by Mr. Gunnar Kwon, who lists his address c/o Augustana Lutheran Church, 111

of Lutheran work in Korea, neither my brother nor I have ever been the treasurer, nor did I ever see any of the KLM general treasury money except my own monthly salary. All through the

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Book Soo Dong, Suwon City, Korea. Mr. Kwon has apparently been in touch with representatives of the Lutheran Church in various parts of the world. He also had contacted me some months ago and at his request I arranged for a meeting with him in Seoul, Korea, on March 27, 1971, during a week of consultations with members of the Korea Lutheran Church. I feel that some of my experiences with/and impressions of Mr. Kwon may be helpful to share.

When Mr. Kwon contacted me prior to my visit to Korea and also upon my arrival there, he indicated he wanted to meet with me to share certain information regarding missionaries of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and members of the Korea Lutheran Mission. He made allegations that there were irregularities in the Korea Lutheran Mission and unethical behavior on the part of certain missionaries in that mission.

In a meeting one hour long with Mr. Kwon in the presence of the former chairman of the Korea Lutheran Mission and a Lutheran Chaplain in the US Air Force to whom Mr. Kwon had related himself, he repeated a number of insinuations and made aspersions to various allegations of improper conduct on the part of certain KLM missionaries. Although he had indicated prior to this that he had documentation to substantiate his allegations, he failed within the hour of discussion to produce a single substantiating document. I can only say it was a most frustrating and non-productive meeting.

This meeting also left me with an unanswered question as to what Mr. Kwon's motivations and goals might be. Apparently he is seeking some kind of support from outside sources, although he makes a big point of being self-supporting. He apparently has Lutheran background in terms of his parents having been brought into the church by Swedish Lutheran missionaries when they were residing in Manchuria during the Japanese occupation. He has also apparently spent several years in Scandinavia within the past number of years. He was characterized to me by some persons who have known him in the past as an opportunist and even a "charlatan."

He had made an approach to the Korea Lutheran Mission in the fall of 1970 with a request to be accepted into the Lutheran Ministry, however, he refused to accept the procedures of the theological training program which has been set up by the Korea Lutheran Church for those who desire to enter the Lutheran ministry.



years, even to this day, an American missionary colleague has been the duly-elected treasurer of KLM and LCK. One of the personal notes on a "Korea Visit" by the former East Asia Secretary and Area Counselor of BFM/LCMS, Rev. Paul Strege, reveals that there were evidently some people in America and Korea, even in the early years, who had asked the question, "whether building our work around the two Ji brothers is wise for the church" (May 7, 1963).

At times Won-Sang has received more criticism than I. One obvious reason is his long direct involvement in leadership as the head of the LCK for nearly two decades. Some criticism originated in the early 70s when there was some unrest among the LCK personnel. For the record, I will mention only a few openly known instances of slanderous mail. In the early 70s a letter came to a Lutheran layman in Korea, criticizing Won-Sang on the basis of certain false assumptions, written by a former worker in the LCK who later immigrated to the United States.<sup>[4]</sup> Ten years later, in May 1980, a person identified only as "Pastor H. C. K." wrote a derogatory letter addressed to Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus with copies

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He has subsequently established a fellowship of Koreans in Suwon called the Augustana Lutheran Church. He is apparently involved in a rather extensive letter-writing campaign to seek some kind of recognition and support in other parts of the world and continuing to cast aspersions in an apparent attempt to bring discredit to the Korea Lutheran Church.

Based on my knowledge of and meeting with Mr. Kwon, I would advise extreme caution in any responses made to his overtures, of whatever nature they might be.

In the Name of Christ,  
Paul H. Strege,  
Secretary for the Far East  
Board for Missions  
Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

[4] The letter was dated and signed by the person. However, I prefer not to reveal his name here.



to other LCMS leaders, criticizing me and Won-Sang.<sup>[5]</sup> A more recent letter of a similar nature was written by a person whom I thought I knew. He wrote the letter from America to a Lutheran pastor in Korea, rambling on with the familiar soliloquy: the Jis are getting rich, becoming too strong, possessing LCK, etc. This latest incident hurt me most and I felt betrayed, for I thought I knew the person well and used to regard him as a friend.<sup>[6]</sup> By now, Won-Sang and I are familiar with this kind of groundless slander. At times we laugh; at times we pity the writers.

On the other hand, we have had many more friends than adversaries from whom we receive encouragement, support, understanding and confidence. Among them are certainly our immediate Korean national colleagues of the LCK and expatriate missionary friends. So far, Won-Sang has received at each LCK Convention an almost unanimous vote of support for his leadership.

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[5] Although this letter was written anonymously (no date, but received on May 9, 1980), we have some clue as to its writer. A copy of the letter was sent to me and to Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, then the president of Concordia Seminary. By my choice, I responded on May 23, 1980 to this anonymous letter from "Pastor H.C.K." by sending it to Dr. Bohlmann, Dr. Preus, Dr. Ed. Westcott, and Dr. Sam Nafzger who had previously received a copy of the anonymous letter. Drs. Bohlmann (5-27-80), Preus (5-28-80), and Westcott (5-29-80) sent me their kind responses. After that nothing further happened. In the meantime, Rev. Hae-Chul KIM in the LCK wrote a letter of explanation to Dr. Jacob A. O. Preus, dated August 1, 1980, with copies to Dr. Bohlmann and Dr. Westcott, defending Won-Sang. He also made clear that he had nothing to do with the incident, even though his initials were used.

[6] This slanderous letter was addressed to Rev. Hae-Chul KIM in Korea, dated Feb. 20, 1986, written in Korea, by a Korean Lutheran pastor (signed by him) in the United States whose name I purposely do not reveal. Since these derogatory letters reveal some wild guesses and at places indicated a sign of mental disturbance (and furthermore these were made in open and thus read by various people), there is no use to append them here, nor is it an edifying thing to do so.

Some people may wonder how Won-Sang and I get along so well in work and in life. Here I would reveal the secret (!) of where our strength really lies, humanly speaking. Won-Sang has what I don't have; I have something he may not possess. Since we both recognize these gifts, we can appreciate each other, and enjoy life and work together as brothers and colleagues. Also, there is a special bond between us because we are the only ones from our family in the communist-occupied North who fled to the South.<sup>[7]</sup>

Here we found the Lutheran church, and have dedicated our lives for the ministry of the Lord in the Lutheran Church. We are proud of each other with the kind of respect and love which our native culture expects in a proper relationship between brothers. We are different, and our differences are precisely our mutual strength. No one may destroy this relationship, for which we thank the Lord.

## 5. Future Leadership for the LCK

God works in the church and through the church. We have experienced it in the past three decades through KLM/LCK. The same Lord, I am confident, will lead the LCK in the future. As in the past and present, so in the future God will use His servants to lead in His cause. Leadership is the key word. I feel that the first and the last item to pray for is **leadership**. The future of a small church body like LCK especially depends upon its leadership.

The "Ji era" will be over. Won-Sang and I have been aware of it more than anyone else. I am convinced that the Lord has His own plan for the future of LCK. From personal experience in

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[7] I came to the South in January 1946 and Won-Sang in summer 1947. Since then, we have not been able to have any contact with our family in Chaeryung, no more than 120 miles north from Seoul.

Korea and in the West, as a missionary worker, mission executive, and professor of theology and mission, I have learned many valuable lessons which may likewise be helpful for future generations. With that in mind I list some of them here, together with a few suggestions.

To the person who would be a leader, in addition to being a person of firm faith, prayer and dedication:

- 1) A leader must possess leadership capabilities (not just with a title or hat) for leading the people and being led by people. All may participate in choosing a leader, but not all can be leaders. It is a special gift.
- 2) A true leader is motivated by the cause, the "work" itself, and totally committed to it, to live and to die for it. He must be "intoxicated" by his work.
- 3) Leadership requires imagination and creativity with new ideas, realism, aspiration, ideals and initiative.
- 4) Self-confidence is an indispensable trait for a leader. He must move forward without fear, when so convinced by the work.
- 5) True leadership is not easily distracted by small slanders and misunderstandings.
- 6) A true leader can distinguish between strong leadership and dictatorial leadership.
- 7) A change in leadership alone does not automatically solve a problem. He must be open to a shorter or a longer term of office. For the capable leader, ten years can be too short; while for the incapable, even two years can be too long.

To the national church and its leadership:

- 1) Maintain integrity and sincerity as a person in whom Christ is present.
- 2) Build up personal credibility among your national peers, missionary colleagues and partner churches overseas. Don't disappoint your friends.

- 3) Plan the work responsibly, and implement it likewise.
- 4) Render the glory and honor to the Lord; share the credit generously with your colleagues.
- 5) Don't imitate a "dictator," nor pattern after an incompetent "office holder."

To the mission executives of the sending church:

- 1) Do one's task not only as an efficient executive but also as a pastor and a theologian. You have both the right and the responsibility of articulating the theology of missions along with implementing the decisions of the church body and its mission board.
- 2) Be generous in complimenting and encouraging the work of the missionaries under your responsibility and the national workers in your partner churches.
- 3) Assume a role of helping to facilitate the work of the national church. Avoid the image of either "taskmaster" or "Santa Claus." The churches of the Two-Thirds World today need encouragement to move from dependency to a relation of interdependency with traditional partners in the west.
- 4) We need to keep in mind that all of us — no matter how competent — all pass away and are soon forgotten; but the mission of the Lord alone will remain till the end of time.

The future of the LCK indeed depends upon a leadership which is motivated by the word of the Lord and tries to follow His will and guidance. Money follows person, not the reverse. The money and other necessary resources will always be available where there are workable ideas, sound planning, and responsible management and implementation. After all, God is the source of all resources needed for His purpose. A petty person chases money around, is anxious for fame, and worries about the future; a great person always seeks **what should** be done even before contemplating **how** it will be done.

True, the LCK belongs to God, not to any humans. We have

been merely trying to be His faithful and effective instruments. On the way I often failed; and at times, thanks to God, I succeeded.

May God bless the LCK with many faithful, truly committed leaders in the years to come!

## Epilogue

Even youths grow tired and weary,  
and young men stumble and fall;  
but those who hope in the Lord  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint. (Is. 40:30-31; NIV)

As I now conclude this personal excursion along the paths of the AKLM/LCK and near the end of my life's pilgrimage, many things come to mind, mostly personal and retrospective in nature:

- 1) My becoming a Christian by the grace of God is the sole cause of all in my life. If I hadn't come to know my personal Savior Jesus Christ, I could not be what I am now.
- 2) Had I not found Luther and the Lutheran Church, the course of my life would have been entirely different.
- 3) Were I not blessed with an excellent spouse, children, colleagues, and many good opportunities in Korea, in Europe, and in America, I could have not done what I did. My only regret is that I should have done more and better with such abundant blessings.

With a deep sense of appreciation, joy, and satisfaction, I append here some complimentary words written by friends and colleagues.<sup>[1]</sup> These make me feel humble and overwhelmed. I can only say: at least I have tried my best to live up to such friendly

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[1] The following is quoted from sources as indicated:

"A report on our work in Korea would not be complete without reference to the unique position and contributions of Dr. Ji [Won Yong] in the

comments. Then, I also realize that “my best” does not necessarily mean “the best” of their expectations.

As I reminisce on times past, once again I reflect on the thoughtful words of direction and purpose for my work spoken by Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann, my former professor and mentor and later colleague, upon my departure on my journey for God’s mission to the world, measuring that “moment” in its depth, breadth and length (see Documentation VI). Why am I still living

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Christian movement in Korea. Besides being producer of the Korean Lutheran Hour and director of the . . . , he is involved in the following positions and/or activities: [a lengthy listing] . . . Because of connections and rapport that Dr. Ji has from before the war [The Korean War] with present leaders in the church in Korea, the position of influence which he exercises can be appreciated fully only by those who are acquainted with the meaning of personal relationships in an oriental culture. He has also become prominent as representative of the non-NCC-affiliated churches in the EACC movement, and recently received an invitation from the Bishop of York to attend a conference of world church leaders on Bible Society work, meeting in the Netherlands in June 1964, the only Korean to receive an invitation to this particular meeting.”

(Rev. Paul H. Strege, “REPORT: Visit to Korea,” Oct. 9-19, 1963, p. 6. Strege is the former Secretary for East Asia of the BWM/LCMS.)

“In any event the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, pursuant to authorization given at its convention in Houston in 1953, decided in 1954 to establish a Lutheran program in Korea. There is no evidence that reference was made to the existence or nature of Christian work and witness in Korea prior to the entry of Lutheranism into this country. In the light of this fact, it is to the eternal credit of our first group of missionaries [Bartling, Dorow, Voss], together with our first national Korean churchman, Dr. Won Yong Ji, that they had the vision and the courage to engage in a ‘fresh approach’ in establishing the Lutheran presence in Korea. This approach was not conceived in terms of a narrow denominationalism, or in competition with the many other Christian groups already at work in this country. Rather, the objective was to bring to the existing Christian cause in Korea certain unique Lutheran contributions — both theological and practical — especially in terms of



while many of my peers and comrades are gone a long time ago in war and in peacetime? I would answer by saying — to proclaim what God has done in Jesus Christ in this time and to future generations.

I feel I have lived my regular portion of life. Whatever time is left for me and whatever I may do from now on, I would count as a "bonus" from the good Lord which I consider a privilege and not a toil. I have long cherished these words of Luther: "Wo ein theologischer Lehrer<sup>8</sup> zu seinem Auftrag nicht auch Freude

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the radio ministry, Christian literature, community outreach, and theological scholarship. . . Small wonder that the 'chill' which characterized the reception of the new Lutheran venture into Korea on the part of other Protestant missionaries gradually gave way to a spirit of friendly acceptance, and to a feeling of relief that the Lutheran approach was proving to be cooperative rather than competitive and divisive."

(Taken from a study on "The Lutheran Church In Korea: A Study of The Church in Mission," Thomas Coates, 1971, pp. 1f.)

"It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this proposed plan ["Visiting Professor Exchange Plan"] for development of the theological training program of the Lutheran Church in Korea. If Dr. Ji [Won Yong] were teaching at Luther Seminary one semester each year, he could be listed as a regular faculty member recognized by the Ministry of Education [of the Republic of Korea]. His credentials will add considerable weight as we apply to the Ministry for licensing as a degree-granting institution. Dr. Ji's name is already well known in church circles throughout Korea through his writings and translation work. His presence on our faculty would greatly aid us in recruiting high quality students. Finally, and most important, Dr. Ji's gifts as a teacher, especially as a professor of systematic and confessional theology, would contribute immeasurably to the quality of the ministerial candidates which Luther Seminary prepares for service in the Lutheran Church in Korea. In that same connection, the presence of Dr. Ji would provide great encouragement and stimulation for our small faculty."

(Taken from a letter of Dr. Maynard Dorow to Dr. Karl Barth of Concordia Seminary, August 29, 1983, p. 2)



mitbekommt, da bleibt ihm nur mühevollen Arbeit." For that task I will continue my pilgrimage and try to fix my eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:2), until the final call of the Lord.

"Since my youth, O God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come" (Ps. 71 : 17-18). "I will not die but live, and will proclaim what the Lord has done" (Ps. 118 : 17).

Wiewohl er gestorben ist, redet er noch. . .

(see Heb. 11:4b, Luther: WA-DB, 7. Band, 371)

## **Appendix A: Summary Report of the Visitation of LCMS Asiatic Mission Field:**

### **Part X: KOREA, by Rev. Herman H. Koppelman, 1952**

[The first page of the general information related to Korea is omitted.]

To this land we were permitted to go by the army for a survey and to confer with chaplains. Our stay was brief, from July 17 to 22, but in company of chaplain John F. Gaertner (Col.) we feel the experience was rewarding.

Letting out of the picture the desolation and upsets occasioned by war we would report on a session with Dr. [George Nak-Joon] Paik, head of Chosun Christian University and head of the department of education in the cabinet of the Korean president. Some of our notes indicate that as far as the government is concerned the doors would be wide open to us. Our difficulty would be to get permission from our own government and army due to the problem in logistics that would arise at once. Recently a Baptist has come into Pusan, setting up a complete compound geared to medical, social and evangelistic work. In these days all these avenues would have to be explored and used. Social problems must receive priorities for a while. Due to the war young men have been called from the rice paddies and have had more and wider experiences than they would have had in a lifetime ordinarily. Will they be satisfied to return to the agricultural life? What shall be the long-term approach to the problem of the orphans, the beggar children, the veterans, the young people who hardly know what home is? Today there is a doctrinal dispute hampering the free working of the Presbyterians and the Methodists are considered modernistic. In the way of comity the four Presbyterian groups operating in Korea have divided the country between themselves. This would not affect others. A number of pastors have attached themselves to U. N. relief organizations and thereby have penetrated deeply into the villages.

We also took the opportunity to call on Rev. Anderson of the Methodist Mission in Seoul. From the discussion it appeared that their work was more on the institutional side. Even now they had a boys' school of over

700 and a girls' school of over 300. There was a large church on the compound though that was blown out. Five orphanages are being supported in the immediate area. An extensive work is being done in rural areas, teaching farm methods, building, house planning, house keeping, etc. There are some forty pastors in the Seoul area and a like amount about Ichong [sic around Inchon]. Not much work is being done in literature. Just now, he said, it would be difficult for anyone to come because nothing is static and large institutions would be necessary. Colleges and schools would be an absolute essential.

We had the pleasure of speaking to four groups of soldiers; two Protestant groups; two specifically Lutheran groups. We also had a conference with a number of Lutheran Chaplains. Among other things we naturally considered the question of our church's entry into Korea. Our diary gives these reactions: "Men not too excited about it. Fear today's people are opportunists looking for American advantages. Feel that two or three years should go by before we undertake work. Must be done in large force. Both Presbyterian and Methodist work well done and established over large areas." Yet these very men are interested in the prospect of our beginning work. Several Lutheran groups are collecting funds against the day when our church will enter the field. We were given \$200 by one of the chaplains, and this gift represented such offerings. The Board is also aware that Won Yong Ji has now completed his theological course [his M. Div. work in June, 1952] and that other Koreans are preparing in our schools and that more want to come over for such study. There are many calls for action now. Our own recommendation, given for what it may be worth, is that an effort be made to gather as much information as we can on the present status of the church in Korea and also of the nation as such and that we keep our eyes focused on this part of the world for a possible open door. A more detailed picture would help considerably. Some call may come quite speedily since certain soldiers and officers of the Missouri Synod have taken the opportunity to conduct Sunday schools, Bible classes, and even what might be called services for Koreans living about or near the military establishments. Some of these efforts have met with considerable success.

Whether this would still hold true or not when we are ready to move in is impossible to say, but because Korea felt the oppression of imperial Japan for half a century the representatives of the government told us

they would not accept a mission if it were an adjunct to one in Japan. It must be distinctively for Korea.

With jets and bombers and helicopters overhead, with heavily laden munitions and personnel trucks rumbling over the roads, with trains groaning under the burden of heavy military equipment, with Red Cross marked trains and ambulances conveying their loads of human hatred and suffering, the work goes forward. The Sunday before the North Koreans broke across the 38th parallel there was dedicated in Seoul the White Stone Church. It was built and paid for by refugees from North Korea. It seats a thousand people. Although this city of a million and a quarter people has been 80 % bombed out, this church stands untouched. We were told that 1,000 people attended each week. A number of other churches, and there are quite a few in Seoul, report similar attendances, though it cannot be said that this is universal. May God give us the wisdom to see His leading and to act upon it promptly and fully when it comes.

## **Appendix B: REPORT TO THE BOARD (BFM-LCMS): on the Trip of Visitation and Exploration of 1954-1955 by Dr. O. H. Schmidt [1955]**

"Remember, there is a price on your head," said one of our chaplains to me as I was about to leave Korea a few weeks ago. He meant this not so much to indicate that the Communists might be after me, but that might be the case on general principles, but rather that I would carry a great responsibility for the work of our overseas mission when reporting to the home Board and to the church in general and I am keenly and humbly aware of that responsibility.

"What do you see over there, anyway?" we ask in reference to the trip just completed. That is a very pertinent question, especially for you members of the board. The answer depends, of course, on what you are looking for and expect to see.

You will gain a quick look and a rapid orientation of the present status of our work and of the state of the church in the countries visited, those in which we are already at work and other countries which you visit with a view of study or survey . . .

And then we come to Korea. Synod at the Houston Convention in 1953 granted permission to our Board to start work if and when the Board felt the time was ripe. It took some doing for yours truly to get into Korea. We are very happy that we were able to make a trip there. Rev. Delmar Glock went with me. We left Tokyo on a Monday morning and returned on a Friday evening. During our stay at Korea we were the guests, so to say, of the United States Army as Chief Chaplain Woods saw to it that we were well taken care of. Landing at the airport, a young chaplain, Rev. Gundermann, said that he was at our service, and that he had a jeep which could take us wherever we wanted to go. We were quartered in a Chaplain's Retreat. When Chaplain Woods heard that I was anxious to speak to Chaplain Schliesser and Rev. Clapool [Claypool], he saw to it that these men were brought in, Rev. Schliesser from the frontline where he is with the Paratroopers, and Rev. Clapool [Claypool] up from Pusan [Pusan]. This is a man, an Augustana Lutheran, who is in charge of all the distribution of relief. Since he is a very active man he has covered a great deal of the territory of Korea, and has watched especially for church openings. Interviews with these various chaplains therefore were very

profitable. In addition, we were able to have lengthy interviews with men like Dr. Hong-Ki KARL, the head of the Public Relations Department of the Korean Government. You ought to hear that man talk about the need of the Lutheran Church for coming into Korea. He said, "You Lutherans are the last large church denomination to give any thought to Korea, and we need just your kind of church work here. Your kind of church effort would fit well with the entire character of work being carried on in Korea." He told us that the government was building two new 100,000 kilowatt transmitters, one to be opened in August and the other at the end of the year, and that there would be time on both of them for us if we were established as a mission in Korea. In addition there are a number of other radio stations which we could use. In fact, the Presbyterians are already broadcasting the Lutheran Hour in English every Sunday morning. While we mentioned to Dr. Karl that probably some objection would be raised to our coming to Korea since the world would consider Korea a rather Christian country, he said, "Well, it is estimated that there are some 30,000,000 in Korea. Of these about 1,000,000 are Christians. Now, what of the other 29,000,000?" Something very similar was stated by Dr. George Paik [George Nak-Joon PAIK], the president of Chosen University [now, Yonsei University]. He also urged very strongly that our church should come into Korea. Like sentiments came from the lips of men like Dr. Torrey, a veteran of many years of experience, Dr. Annette [Ned] Adams, 40 years of experience in Korea, Dr. Otto DeCamp, of the Presbyterian church, who showed a great deal of kindness and courtesy to us. We also met Mr. Ting [King] an advisor of President Sigmond [Syngman] Rhee, a Missouri Synod Lutheran, whose wife is a Frerking, from Concordia, Missouri. All these men were unanimous in their urging that we come into Korea. I might mention also Rev. Im [Young-Bin], the head of the Bible Society for Korea, and Rev. Han [Kyong-Jik] and Rev. Kang, of the Young-Nak church in Seoul. This church has an interesting history. It seats 2,000. If you come there for the first service on Sunday morning you may not even be able to get inside of the door. If you stick around you might get in for the second service. They have morning worship every morning at 5:00 or 5:30. They have an evening service or Bible class, and I came there after 9 o'clock and found the church 80 percent filled. The church had been destroyed by the Communists but was immediately rebuilt by the North Korean refugees. This church also

has a Christian day-school of 1,000 children grades one to six. We also had an interview with Mr. Ji [Won Sang], a brother of the Mr. Ji [Won Yong] who has been in our seminary here in St. Louis. This young man, on his own, started mission work among older boys and young men at Suwon, about 25 miles from Seoul. At first he worked in a tumbledown tent then some of the army boys helped him put a real neat chapel. But at the present time Mr. Ji [Won Sang] is at a seminary in Seoul.

[If we decide at this time to begin work in Korea,] we ought to start with a team of three men, as I see it. One would need to devote himself pretty much to the radio possibilities, another would be working mainly in the metropolitan area of Seoul, and the third man would be more free to roam around and start nuclei in the rural areas surrounding Seoul. Mr. Claypool told us that the farther south one gets in Korea, the less there is to be seen of Christian church work. That there are at least 500 communities of considerable size that have never been touched by Christian work, that large areas north and east of Puzon [Pusan] and also south and west of Puzon [Pusan] would offer wide open fields for us if we intended to start there. It is quite evident to us also that other Lutherans are hardly in a mood to begin work in Korea, so that if anything is to be done at all it would be up to the Missouri Synod.

Speaking of the radio, we were overwhelmed again to note what a marvelous help the broadcasting of the Lutheran Hour and other programs by us can be. It seems to me however that we should reorganize our radio work to some extent. For instance there should be a clear cut division, let us say in Tokyo, between the work of the Lutheran Laymen's League which would lead up to the actual putting of the program on the air, and then everything that happens after that would be our particular responsibility, the follow-up, the sending out of literature, of correspondence courses, the contacts with listeners and the things of that sort. We would then also have to work out an equitable division of the money that comes in directly over there for the Lutheran Hour and find an apportionment for the actual production of the programs and then for the follow-up work of our missions. Similarly we need to pay more attention to the radio work in Manila, and I am glad to see that one of the missionaries has been allocated more particularly to this kind of work. If we get into Korea, we shall certainly need to pay particular attention to the radio work there, for that would be a very strong arm of our mission

work in that country. For Tokyo too we should see to it that one missionary is delegated especially to the production of the programs while another missionary might be given part-time or whole time to the rest of the work of the Lutheran Hour. It is manifestly beyond the ability of one man at the present time to do everything that belongs to the production of the programs and to all the follow-up work and a direction of this mission effort . . .



## Appendix C: "Exhibit B," March 21, 1957

### EXHIBIT B BRIEF REGARDING MISSIONARY WORK IN KOREA SUBMITTED BY THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS TO THE SYNODICAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Foreign Missions desires to call to the attention of the Synodical Board of Directors the following considerations pertaining to the inauguration of missionary work in Korea:

#### THE SYNODICAL RESOLUTION

The Synodical convention held in Houston, Texas, in 1953, passed the following *basic resolution* authorizing our Synod's entry into Korea with missionary work:

"Action

"Committee 2 recommended, and Synod *Resolved*:

#### Resolution 21

"WHEREAS, The Lord Jesus Christ gave His Church the command to preach the Gospel to all nations; and

WHEREAS, Korea is the natural link between Japan and China; and

WHEREAS, Only a small percent of the Korean people are Christians, and thus an open door of opportunity is presented to our Church; and

WHEREAS, The sympathy of the people of our Church will go forth in a special manner toward Korea at this time; and

WHEREAS, Chaplains and soldiers members of our Church who have been in Korea speak of the need and opportunity for Christian mission work there; and

WHEREAS, The Lord has directed several Korean students into our midst who are preparing at our institutions for possible future work as missionaries in Korea, if the Lord should make it possible for them to return to that country; and

WHEREAS, The Lord has blessed our beloved Synod with the resources of manpower and material means to make it possible to undertake further missionary endeavors; and

WHEREAS, The Board for Missions in Foreign Countries has been charged by Synod with the resources of manpower and material means to make it possible to undertake further missionary endeavors; and

WHEREAS, The Board for Missions in Foreign Countries has been charged by Synod with the conduct of foreign missions especially in the Far East; therefore be it

“RESOLVED, that permission be granted to the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries to begin mission work in Korea when the time and opportunity for that undertaking are at hand.”

(Proceedings of the Forty-Second Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Houston, Texas, June 17-26, 1953, page 455.)

It is this resolution which the Board of Foreign Missions now wishes to carry out. The Board respectfully requests the Synodical Board of Directors to implement this Synodical resolution through favorable action.

## CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN KOREA

(Here give an accurate, yet concise history of Christian missionary work in Korea, showing, among other facts, when the work was begun and what blessing it has enjoyed.)

In evaluating the historical facts concerning Christian missionary work in Korea listed above, attention is called to the following factors:

1. Protestant Christianity in Korea is basically fundamental and conservative in character. The type of Christianity you will find in Korea is of a rather determined, sturdy, self-reliant, serious character. The kind of work that the Missouri Synod would do would fit very well into the character of the Korean people.
2. Although the Presbyterians and Methodists have been at work in Korea for about seventy years; and although Baptists, Mennonites and Pentecostals are also at work in a very modest way, no other Lutheran work is being carried on in Korea at this time. The lone exception is a small pocket of Finnish Lutherans in the interior. Inquiries carried on by Dr. O. H. Schmidt have established that no other Lutheran body seems

inclined to undertake work in Korea in the proximate future.

3. Historically, the main development of Christian work has taken place in North Korea, which is now under Communist control. The farther you come south and east, the more there is need for Christian missionary work. There are hundreds of communities which have never had any Christian missionary work.

### “THE TIME AND OPPORTUNITY ARE AT HAND”

The Board of Foreign Missions should like to submit to the Synodical Board of Directors the conviction that “the time and opportunity for that undertaking are at hand,” in the phraseology of the Synodical resolution. It is our conviction that “the time is at hand” for our Church’s missionary entry into Korea. In support of this conviction, your Board respectfully calls attention to the following considerations:

1. A measure of *peace* has been established in Korea after the conclusion of the Korean conflict. Our experience in Japan has demonstrated that the period immediately following the upheaval of war is favorable to the inauguration of a missionary program.

2. The *Government* of the Republic of South Korea is friendly to any effort we might make along the line of establishing our Church in Korea. Men of high position in the government have assured us of that.

3. Discussions with leaders of *other church bodies* working in Korea have also assured us of a cordial welcome.

4. Members of the *Armed Services* of our country, as well as chaplains of our Church, have established many contacts in Korea and have created a very favorable impression. Some of these have started Gospel work in various places on their own, as far as they were able to go.

5. *The Lutheran Hour* is now being broadcast in English over Radio stations KLKY in Seoul and HLKX in Inchon, and responses to these programs are beginning to come in.

6. Especially in South and East Korea, *open doors beckon us* to come in, in the form of many areas and substantial communities where no Christian work is being carried on at the present time. While it is true that Korea is the most Christian of any Far Eastern country and that a high percentage of men in high Government and business circles are Christian, it is nevertheless true that only four percent of the population is Christian.

As Dr. George Paik, the President of Chosen University, said to Dr. O. H. Schmidt: "There are about thirty million people in Korea; of these about one million are classified as Christians; but what of the other twenty-nine million?" And Dr. Hong - Ki Karl, head of the Ministry of Communications of the Government, used about the same comparison, and then almost shouted: "What is the matter with you Lutherans? You are about the only large denomination that has paid no attention to Korea!" The Reverend Howard Claypool, an Augustana Lutheran who heads the distribution of relief in Korea and who has crisscrossed that country and knows its needs, spent a long evening with Dr. Schmidt and told him that the main development of Christian work had been in Northern Korea, and that the farther you came south and east, the more the need for Christian work would strike you; that there are hundreds of communities which never had any Christian work.

7. An open door is also beckoning us in the field of radio evangelism. Dr. Hong-Ki Karl, Minister of Communications of the Republic of South Korea, has assured us of weekly time on the transmitters of the Government of South Korea, and has repeated this assurance to various of our representatives over a period of years. We earnestly believe that the radio can prove to be a powerful aid to missionary work, as it has proved itself to be in Japan. This promise, is, however, conditioned upon the establishment of our Church's missionary work in Korea. Dr. Karl did not desire to have transcriptions or tapes shipped in from some foreign country, but wanted a sponsoring Church right on the ground.

8. "The time and opportunity for that undertaking are at hand" is our conviction from the viewpoint of the strategy of our Church's *missionary progress*. Missionary work in Korea would flank our work in Japan and would prove to be an added citadel of Gospel truth in this part of the world. It will add, we feel, support and weight to further work among Chinese-speaking people.

9. "The time and opportunity for that undertaking are at hand" also, we feel, from the viewpoint of *our Church's position* in the year of our Lord 1957. Psychologically it should have a good effect upon our members to think that a country that saw so much of bloodshed and hardship for our young men is now also being benefited by the Christian work which we can do. Synod has just demonstrated through its Venture of Faith advance that it can do big things for the Lord. Now it should be a stimulating

challenge to set another venture before them. And as one of our esteemed professors remarked: It really does not cost Synod anything to start a new field, because so much new interest will be engendered that this will result in enough added contributions to make that work possible.

10. "The time and opportunity for that undertaking are at hand" also because the Lord of the Church has placed at Synod's disposal suitable *manpower* for this undertaking. The fact is that just at this time we have some very valuable manpower available for such a venture into Korea. Mr. Won Yong Ji is about ready to receive his doctor's degree from our seminary, from which he was graduated a few years ago. There are several other Korean students in our institutions at the present time, and there are other men either in the graduating class or in classes recently graduated who are greatly interested in Korea and who could be recruited for this work. It would be regrettable if we allowed those talents to be wrapped up and buried.

### PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION: FIRST YEAR

The Board of Foreign Mission proposes to employ the following plan of action with respect to our Church's missionary entry into Korea:

1. The Board is determined that right from the outset a Korean Lutheran Church should be established on an indigenous basis. The outstanding success of other Protestant groups in Korea in attaining this goal gives us the conviction that the same blessing of God will also attend our missionary labors in Korea.

2. The Board proposes that missionary work in Korea be begun by sending out a team of well qualified men. It is not planned to send a great number of American missionaries, but should be a skeleton crew. These must then concentrate on the training of Korea nationals. Two possibilities are suggested, the first a desirable basic team, and the second, in our view, *the irreducible minimum*.

- a. We believe that the *basic team* should consist of *five* American men. One man would definitely be kept in line for theological training. One man would be definitely assigned to radio work. One man would be the head missionary in the city of Seoul. Another man ought to be used for penetrating into the various country

areas. And a fifth man might be a layman who right from the beginning could be added to the team and who could look after the various business details that will no doubt storm in upon our missionaries from all sides.

- b. We believe that the *irreducible minimim* with which our Church should begin missionary work in Korea is the following:

Three men are to be sent out to Korea in 1957. Two more men are to be sent in 1959. These five men are to constitute the American staff until 1961 or 1962. These men are to be told right from the start that it is the plan of the board to work with this staff and that they can expect no further missionary personnel until these first five years are over. After five years the situation is to be evaluated and a new plan is to be drawn up.

One of the original team is to be stationed as the missionary in Seoul; another man is to devote himself to the radio mission; the third man is to work out from Seoul into more rural fields especially in the direction of the south and east of Korea.

3. The Board proposes that work be begun in Seoul, the capital city of South Korea. Shortly thereafter work should also be opened in one other city, probably Pusan, in the south. From these two bases the work should branch out in concentric circles.

4. Right from the outset emphasis should be given to the *training of national workers*. We are now in contact with some men who will be ready to receive additional training.

5. In addition to the American staff, Mr. Won Yong Ji is to serve from the outset as a leader in establishing the Korean Lutheran Church on an indigenous basis.

## PROJECTION OF FINANCIAL REQUIREMENT

1957, request	\$ 21,000.00 from Synod's Contingency Reserve Fund
1958	\$ 27,000.00
1959	\$ 40,000.00
1960	\$ 45,000.00
1961	\$ 45,000.00

This is based on the experience of the average cost of sending and maintaining a missionary on the foreign field.

As to capital investments, again based on experience, the Board estimates that \$60,000.00 would be needed in 1958 for housing, another housing expenditure of \$40,000.00 in 1960. There might be incidental expenses of a capital investment nature in addition to these, but it is not expected that these will amount to a sizeable sum.

Estimating that the budget for foreign missions will be increased by 11% annually, the projected work in Korea as outlined above will absorb only two to three per cent of the anticipated foreign budget for the next five years and should not cut into the work projected for the other far eastern fields to any appreciable degree whatever. It must be expected that there will be fluctuations in the percentages needed for the respective fields in a given year, since at some time there may be a high capital investment necessary in one field, and nothing of that nature in other years, but a rough schedule of present plans would apportion 36-25% to India for the next five years; 6% (Formosa), 7% (Hong Kong) to Chinese-speaking fields; 12-16% to the Philippines; 25-20% to Japan; 10-15% to New Guinea. Major capital investments that loom up in the next five years are those for a seminary in Japan, for a seminary in the Philippine Islands, and schools and chapels in Hong Kong, to meet some housing needs in New Guinea and the Philippines. Larger additions in manpower are planned for the Philippines and New Guinea, and to some extent in Japan, and very little of this kind on the other fields. 3% — Korea; 3%—General Administration.

It is our feeling that the development of work in Korea is definitely of such a kind that it should not add too great a financial burden nor too great a drain on manpower, upon our resources here at home, but should serve as an added stimulus for determined and aggressive work and should fit in very well with the entire program of expansion of our Gospel work over the face of the globe, in accordance with and out of loyalty to our blessed Savior and Redeemer and His missionary command.

## THE MISSIONARY CHALLENGE

Beyond the statistical calculations of manpower and money, the Board of Foreign Missions is in reality pleading with the Synodical Board of Directors for the souls of men—Korean men and women who, by the grace of God and through the power of His Spirit, may be won for th-

Lord Jesus Christ through out Church's missionary labors in Korea. The Synodical resolution of the Houston Convention is now over three years old. We believe that we cannot be charged with precipitate haste if we now respectfully request the implementation of this Synodical resolution. It is the Board's conviction that "the time and opportunity" for the carrying out of this resolution "are at hand" and that the necessary open doors have been provided by the Lord of the church. We believe that we have the obligation to take God at His Word and promise, implement our obedience to the Savior's great Missionary Command, and go forward in faith.



## **Appendix D: CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE KOREA LUTHERAN SUNKYOHOI, 1971**

### **Preamble**

Pursuant to our Lord's will that His spiritual gifts should be shared for the common good, and in recognition of our special responsibility to share the theological and spiritual heritage of the Lutheran Reformation with the people of Korea, we have undertaken the establishment of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei in accordance with the following constitution:

### **Article I: *Name***

The name of the ecclesiastical body organized under this constitution shall be the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei.

### **Article II: *Basis of Faith***

All members of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei accept without reservation the following:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and as the only rule and norm of faith and practice.
2. The three ecumenical creeds, namely the Apostles', the Nicene and the Athanasian, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, as true and universally valid expositions of Holy Scripture and statements of Christian doctrine.

The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei also acknowledges the doctrinal validity and the historical importance of the Large Catechism of Martin Luther, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord, as further expressions of the evangelical theology of the Lutheran Reformation.

### Article III: *Objectives*

The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi as a participant in the mission of the whole Christian Church in Korea recognizes two basic and inseparable objectives:

1. To bear witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ so that men may come to the saving knowledge of God in Christ and be "equipped unto all good work."
2. To reflect God's love for mankind in loving and sacrificial service to men in their bodily as well as their spiritual needs.

### Article IV: *Functions*

To accomplish these objectives, the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi shall engage in the following activities:

1. Participating in ecumenical endeavors, consistent with its own confessional position, for the furtherance of Christian unity and witness.
2. Planning for and implementing an overall strategy of Christian evangelism.
3. Engaging in a ministry of mercy and service to the community.
4. Engaging in a ministry of mass communications media, e.g., literature, radio, television, etc.
5. Establishing local congregations.
6. Creating special ministries in accord with specific circumstances.
7. Training ministers and other professional church workers.
8. Providing for the Christian education and nurture of all of its members.
9. Training the laity for growth in Christian knowledge and service.
10. Fostering the understanding and practice of Christian worship in conformity with the Lutheran liturgical heritage.

11. Supervising and protecting its ministers and other professional church workers.
12. Developing an economic base which provides effectively for ongoing ministries.

#### Article V: *Membership*

1. Membership in the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei shall be held and may be acquired by local congregations, clergymen, and full-time professional workers of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei who accept and confess the Basis of Faith in Article II of this constitution.
2. A member of a local congregation shall have affiliation with the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei through his membership in a local church which holds membership in the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei.

#### Article VI: *Legal Authority*

The legal authority of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei is contained in the *Articles of Incorporation of the Juridical Person, Korea Lutheran Mission*, which was approved by the Ministry of Education of the Korean Government on April 28, 1961.

#### Article VII: *Ecclesiastical Relationships*

1. The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei recognizes the existence of local Lutheran congregations within its jurisdiction. Further aspects of the relationship between the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei and the local congregation are described in the By-Laws.
2. The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei stands in a fraternal relationship with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, under whose auspices the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei has come into being.

3. The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi also recognizes a close relationship with other Lutheran bodies throughout the world. To express and to further this relationship, the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi supports the objectives and participates in activities of the Lutheran World Federation.
4. The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi recognizes other Christian Churches as participants in, and manifestations of, the Body of Christ, and cooperates with them in matters of Christian action and witness to a degree consistent with its own confessional position.

### Article VIII: *Organization*

1. General Assembly
  - a. The General Assembly shall be the policy-establishing body of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
  - b. The General Assembly shall be composed of voting delegates. These include all clergymen, full-time parish workers, department supervisors, expatriate missionaries called to service in the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi and one lay member (non-Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi staff worker) from every local church recognized by the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
  - c. Every voting delegate at the General Assembly shall hold membership in a local Lutheran congregation.
  - d. The General Assembly shall convene at least once every year. If necessary, special General Assemblies may be held.
  - e. The General Assembly shall elect the officers of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi. These shall be the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer.
  - f. The General Assembly shall also elect members of the Executive Board.
2. Executive Board
  - a. The Executive Board shall administer the affairs of the

Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei in accord with its Constitution and By-Laws.

- b. The Executive Board shall consist of the officers of the General Assembly, together with the following members-at-large: one national pastor, one Department Supervisor, one lay member (non-Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei worker) and one expatriate missionary.
- c. The chairman of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohei shall also serve as the chairman of the Executive Board.

#### *Article IX: Amendments to the Constitution*

1. Amendments to this constitution may be made, provided they do not conflict with Article II, "Basis of Faith."
2. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Board and upon two-thirds approval of the Executive Board shall be sent in writing to all delegates of the General Assembly three months before it convenes.
3. A two-thirds majority of all votes cast shall be necessary for adoption.

### **BY—LAWS OF THE KOREA LUTHERAN SUNKYOHAI**

#### *Section I: General Assembly*

1. The General Assembly shall be convened by the Chairman in the name of the Executive Board.
2. The Chairman shall preside over the General Assembly.
3. The agenda for the General Assembly shall be prepared by the Executive Board.
4. Two-thirds approval of the Executive Board shall be required for convening special General Assemblies.
5. The quorum for a General Assembly shall consist of the attendance of at least two-thirds of the voting delegates.

6. Lay delegates from the local churches shall be elected annually by the respective local churches.
7. A congregation shall number at least twenty communicants who are over twenty years of age to qualify for sending a voting lay delegate.

### Section II: *Officers of the General Assembly*

1. Eligibility qualifications for General Assembly officers and members-at-large of the Executive Board shall be the following: they must be at least thirty years of age; they must have been communicant members of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi for at least three full years.
2. The Chairman and Vice-chairman of the General Assembly shall be elected from among the ordained Korean pastors and expatriate missionary pastors.
3. When the Chairman is a Korean the Vice-chairman shall be an expatriate missionary; and when the Chairman is a missionary the Vice-chairman shall be a Korean.

### Section III: *Method of Election*

1. Officers of the General Assembly and members-at-large of the Executive Board shall be elected at the regular General Assembly.
2. Election shall be by secret ballot. The first ballot shall be a nomination ballot. The nominee receiving a majority of the votes is elected. If no one receives a majority of the votes, a second ballot is cast; and if no one receives a majority of the votes, a deciding ballot is cast for the two nominees who received the largest number of votes on the second ballot.
3. The term of office of the officers shall be for two years. The term of office of the members-at-large of the Executive Board shall be for one year.

#### Section IV: *Duties of the Officers of the General Assembly*

1. Chairman

- a. He shall represent the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
- b. He shall convene the General Assembly and meetings of the Executive Board.
- c. He shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees.
- d. He shall look after the spiritual welfare of the ministries of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi and shall be the spiritual shepherd to pastors by counseling and assisting them in their ministries.

2. Vice-chairman

- a. He shall assist the Chairman.
- b. He shall act as the Chairman's representative in case the Chairman is prevented from performing his duties.

3. Secretary

- a. He shall prepare and distribute the minutes of the General Assembly and the Executive Board.
- b. He shall insure the safe-keeping of the minutes and other important documents.

4. Treasurer

- a. He shall keep the funds, plan the expenditures and receipts, and assume the financial responsibility of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
- b. All the duties of the treasurer shall be carried out on the basis of policies established by the Finance Committee and approved by the Executive Board.

#### Section V: *The Executive Board*

1. The Executive Board shall hold a meeting at least once every three months.
2. The Chairman of the Executive Board shall prepare the agenda, convene and preside over the meetings.
3. The presence of at least two-thirds of the members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum.

## Section VI: *Duties of the Executive Board*

1. It shall enact matters entrusted to it by action of the General Assembly.
2. It shall be responsible for the orderly administration of all the business matters and programs of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
3. It shall receive regular reports from each standing committee of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi, and it shall take appropriate action in keeping with the policies established by the General Assembly.
4. It shall appoint committee members to the standing committees of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi. (cf. Section VII, 1.)
5. It shall be responsible for all personnel matters.

## Section VII: *Standing Committees*

1. The Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi shall have standing committees as needed.
2. Each committee shall elect its own chairman.
3. If deemed necessary, each committee may request the Executive Board to employ professional staff workers to assist in carrying out its program. Also, if deemed necessary, the Executive Board may appoint a Department Supervisor to supervise the work related to the committee.
4. Members of the standing committees perform their duties on a non-remunerative basis.

## Section VIII: *Functions of Standing Committees*

(Each committee, in consultation with the Executive Board, shall develop a statement which will describe its objectives, functions, and structure. These statements will be ratified in a subsequent General Assembly and will be incorporated here in Section VIII).



## Section IX: *Calls*

### 1. Advice Regarding Calls

Congregations shall seek the advice of the Executive Board when calling pastors.

### 2. Issuance of Calls

- a. The Executive Board shall regularly assign to ministerial candidates calls for which local congregations have sent applications.
- b. The Executive Board shall issue calls into special ministries to qualified personnel.

## Section X: *Ordination and Installation*

### 1. Prerequisites for Ordination

The candidate for the office of the holy ministry in the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi may be ordained when the following prerequisites have been met:

- a. He shall have completed the prescribed course of study and shall have received a diploma from the Lutheran Theological Academy, or he shall have fulfilled the requisites for a colloquy established by the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
- b. He shall have received endorsement by the Lutheran Theological Academy Committee and in every respect shall have been declared qualified by it for the office of the ministry of Word and Sacraments in the Church.
- c. He shall have completed satisfactorily a vicarage requirement as established by the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
- d. He shall have indicated complete dedication to the ministry and the readiness to accept a call extended to him by the responsible authorities.
- e. He shall have received and accepted a call, extended through the proper ecclesiastical channels, to a position of which the incumbent may be ordained according to the regulations of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.

2. Responsibility for Ordination and Installation

The Chairman of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi shall be responsible, in the name of the Church, for the ordination of candidates for the ministry and for the installation of pastors in congregations within the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi, as well as in special ministries within the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.

3. Place and Manner of Ordination and Installation

- a. The ordination of a candidate for the pastoral ministry shall as a rule, for the sake of good order in the church, take place in the presence of the congregation to which he has been called.
- b. The Chairman of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi shall issue a diploma of ordination to each qualified candidate who has received a call within the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.
- c. Candidates and pastors shall be ordained or installed in accordance with accepted Lutheran forms for that purpose, and shall be solemnly pledged to the Scriptures, the Ecumenical Creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions in accordance with Article II, "Basis of Faith," of this Constitution.

Section XI: *Membership of Local Churches*

Members of the local churches related to the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi are communicant members and child members. Communicant members are those who have received baptism as adults or those who have received confirmation after having infant baptism. Child members are those who have received child baptism and have not yet been confirmed.

Section XII: *Recognition of Local Churches*

A local church which is recognized by the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi is a church which has indicated its acceptance of the Constitution of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi and whose Constitution is approved by the General Assembly.

### Section XIII: *Responsibilities of Local Churches*

A local church, in keeping with its circumstances, shall provide for its pastor's salary, support its local workers, and support and participate in special ministries and the work at large as conducted by the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.

### Section XIV: *Finances*

The expenses for maintaining the work of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi is provided by contributions from the local churches, grants from bodies which support the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi, and other gifts which are channeled properly through the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi.

### Section XV: *Property*

Regulations concerning properties, buildings and equipment of every kind held by the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi are contained in "Article III - Property and Management" of the *Articles of Incorporation of the Juridical Person, Korea Lutheran Mission*.

### Section XVI: *Amendments to By-Laws*

Amendments to these By-Laws require approval by at least two-thirds of the voting delegates present at a regular General Assembly.

### Supplementary provision

This Constitution and By-Laws shall go into effect by the approval of the Korea Lutheran Sunkyohoi on 1971. 2. 26. The co-Chairmen of the Korea Lutheran Mission shall be empowered to convene and preside over the first General Assembly.

## Appendix E: The LTA Regulations, 1966

### LTA Regulations, 1966 (temporary)

#### Part One: Object and Purpose

- Article 1. For the purpose of advancing the Christian Church in Korea and of carrying out Korea Lutheran Mission's evangelistic purposes, Korea Lutheran Mission maintains the Lutheran Theological Academy (LTA)
- Article 2. Korea Lutheran Mission will send its ministerial candidates as regular students to the Theological College and/or the United Graduate School of Theology of Yonsei University, where they will complete all the prescribed courses of the university and graduate from the respective institution. However, special courses required by the LTA will be taken under its auspices, and credits for such courses will be recognized by Yonsei University insofar as its academic requirements permit.
- Article 3. All candidates will be under the supervision of the LTA in carrying out all requirements, both academic and practical, and will complete their training by fulfilling all the LTA requirements.

#### Part Two: Length of Study (Training)

- Article 4. The duration of the LTA study program is four years, including both academic and practical training. During the first 6 months the candidate is accepted as a "novice." At the end of this "novice" period his eligibility as a candidate will be reviewed. One who has passed the "novice" period successfully continues for another 6 months period as an LTA "associate candidate." At the end of this period his eligibility will again be reviewed. One who has passed this test will be promoted to the status of "LTA candidate" for one year. At the end of this period a third review session will take place. One who has successfully completed thus far will be promoted to the status of "LTA clergy candidate" and pursue further study for two more years. At the end of this period the candidate who passes the final examinations will receive a

theological diploma and certificate of "Lutheran Quasi-Clergy."

- Article 5. After the completion of four years training as described above the candidate serves in a ministerial capacity for two years as a "Quasi-Clergy" after which prescribed tests (written and oral) will be given. One who has successfully completed all tests can be ordained when a call is extended to him from a Lutheran congregation.

### Part Three: Course of Study

- Article 6. The LTA requires and offers the following course of study. (Cf. the separate sheets.)
- Article 7. The courses which are specially required by LTA will be generally taught at the LTA facilities, and will be recognized by Yonsei University insofar as its academic regulations permit.
- Article 8. The first, second and third reviews (cf. Art. 4 above) will be made by the LTA director and the supervisor (the "bishop" for the student) and final approval will be given by the LTA committee which is appointed by Korea Lutheran Mission. The criteria for the reviews are scholastic achievement, record of practical work, and personal life as a theological student.

### Part Four: Academic Work

- Article 9. During the four years training period the candidate must earn 102 semester credits, of which 6 credits may be earned by a thesis.
- Article 10. The quality of the academic work must be a "B" average, and the credits transferred from other educational institutions must be "B" or above (Standard: "A" means 100-96 %, "A" means 95-91 %, "B" means 90-86 %, "B-" means 85-81 %).

### Part 5: Practical Work

- Article 11. The LTA director delegates each LTA candidate to a supervisor (national clergy or foreign missionary) who will guide the candidate in his field.

Article 12. The period of practical training extends throughout the four years of the LTA training program, and the quality of the work is examined once every two months (if necessary, once a month) by the LTA director and the supervisor of the candidate. Furthermore, once each semester all supervisors, all students and the LTA director get together to make a general evaluation.

### **Part 6: Administration**

Article 13. The Juridical Person Korea Lutheran Mission has a theological committee called LTA Committee. The LTA Committee consists of the LTA Director, professors and other members nominated by KLM. The LTA committee assumes responsibility for the program and the finances of LTA and, when requested by the director, advises and assists in the general administration of the institution.

Article 14. LTA may have the following offices:  
Director, Professor, Lecturer, Academic dean and registrar, Dean of students, Librarian, Business manager, Treasurer.

Article 15. The LTA director supervises all areas of work related to LTA and directs the faculty meeting.

Article 16. Professors, instructors and lecturers will teach respective courses upon the request of the LTA director.

Article 17. The staff who are assigned to the offices of dean, business administration, student guidance, library and other areas will assume their responsibilities under the direction of the LTA director.

### **Part 7: Scholarships**

Article 18. Academic scholarship: Yonsei University tuition will be paid by LTA.

Article 19. Field Work Scholarship: The amount may be flexible on the basis of the given situation. Scholarships will be provided so that the minimum needs of each student will be met.

## Addendum

Article 20. These temporary regulations will be effective from the time of approval by Korea Lutheran Mission.

### **Appendix F: "Pulpit and Altar Fellowship" Issue at LWF Assembly, Budapest, Hungary, 1984**

Won-Sang Ji, President of the Lutheran Church in Korea, speaking in Korean (with interpretation into English) *against* the proposed Constitutional amendment to Article III. 1.

1. The term "pulpit and altar fellowship" is a problematic term.
  - a. It cannot even be translated intelligibly into many other languages.
  - b. It means different things to different people and for different churches. There is no adequate common understanding of its meaning or application.  
Thus the use of this terminology "pulpit and altar fellowship" can well create more problems than the ones it might attempt to solve.
2. It can be perceived and understood by some people and churches that this proposed constitutional amendment contradicts the statement immediately preceding in the present Constitution, especially the provision that as a *free association* of Lutheran churches, the Lutheran World Federation "shall not exercise churchly functions on its own authority nor shall it have power to legislate for the churches belonging to it or to limit the autonomy of any member church."
3. The Assembly should be aware that there could well be other negative consequences if this constitutional amendment is passed. For example, because of the different interpretations and applications given to that problematic term "pulpit and altar fellowship," some churches which have been seriously considering joining the Lutheran World Federation on the basis of the present Constitution would have great difficulty to do so if this article of the Constitution is changed.
4. In conclusion, therefore, this is an issue about which only individual member churches have the right and responsibility to make their own decision, and thus this article of the Constitution should *not* be amended as proposed.

**Appendix G: List of LCK National Pastors and Missionaries**  
(as of March 1, 1988)

**National Pastors**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of Ordination</b>
LIM Jong-Hoon	12/14/87
KIM Yong-Bum	12/14/87
KANG Hyun-Gil	12/13/87
KOO Tae-Wha	10/5/87
KIM You-Seong	8/6/87
KIM Chul-Hwan	1/19/86
KIM Kwang-Ung	1/12/86
LEE Hong-Yol	7/14/85
YOON Deuk-Won	1/12/85
YOON Pyung-Sang	1/12/85
PARK Il-Young	1/15/84
HAN Young-Bok	1/22/83
CHO Eun-Kyu	1/21/80
KIM Seung-Shik (left Luth. Min. May '87)	1/15/78
UM Hyun-Sup	1/30/77
PARK Sung-Wan	9/5/76
KIM Yoon-Chul (moved to USA in Aug. 1987)	1/25/76
HUH Song	1/19/75
KIM Sun-Hoi	10/15/72
HONG Young-Hwan (moved to USA)	1/10/71
BAE Han-Gook (moved to Canada)	1/10/71
KIM Hae-Chul	1/10/71
IM In-Bong	1/10/71
JI Won-Sang	3/28/65
JI Won-Yong (ordained in St. Paul, MN)	8/18/57

**Expatriate Missionaries**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Service in Korea</b>
John F. Raddatz	1984-present
Richard C. Pfaff	1983-present
David J. Susan	1976-1984
Larry W. Myers	1972-1976
Thomas Coates	1969-1972
Delmar J. Glock	1969-1971
Marie-Louise Gebhardt	1969-1971
Charles Lentner	1967-1972
Richard Mackoy	1966-1971
Gotfred Rekkebo	1966-1972
John F. Hodde	1963-1972
Hilbert W. Riemer	1961-present
James P. Lauer	1960-1965
L. Paul Bartling	1958-1975
Maynard W. Dorow	1958-present
Kurt E. Voss	1958-1962

Many Lutheran teachers have served at Seoul Foreign School, a Christian school in Seoul for English-speaking foreign children. Mention should be made here of two who were formally called by the LCK: Mildred Marohn, teacher and then elementary school principal (1966-72), and Ronald R. Richter, elementary school principal (1974-80, 1983-present). Both have made particular contributions to the work of the Lutheran Church in Korea.



## Documentation I: A Resume of the History of Korea

by Won Yong Ji

KOREA has a long history, extending back to the time of Solomon, with many vicissitudes in her national life. The HAN Peninsula of Korea, somewhat like the shape of a sitting rabbit facing westward and surrounded by giant nations, is approximately 150 miles wide and 600 miles long with 2,400 miles of coastline comprising some 85,300 square miles (the state of Missouri: c. 69,000 sq. mi.), and is situated between E. 124-131 degree and north latitude 34-43 degrees. Generally speaking it is a mountainous country, having no plains worthy of the name by American standards. The only flat land is confined to narrow valleys and river estuaries. Northern and eastern Korea are largely mountainous, with the highest peak, Paektu (white head) Mountain, rising to an elevation of over 9,000 feet in the north which is the origin of the Yalu and Tuman Rivers. Nevertheless, the southern and western sections are for the most part hill-and-valley country. All of the mountains are the sources of rivers in the Peninsula, and the rivers have made the soil of the land rich and add additional beauty. The beauty of the land and of the coastline in particular have given rise to an indigenous poetical expression in praise of the attractiveness of the peninsula, "kumsoo kangsan" (means: beautiful landscape). Spectacular scenery is found in many parts of the land.<sup>[1]</sup>

The origin of the Korean people, like that of other old nations, is obscure. A Korean history book says: "Although we do not know the exact date of our ancestors coming to the peninsula of Korea, we may estimate that it took place about four or five thousand years ago. They might have immigrated through northern China and eastward to the peninsula."<sup>[2]</sup> Tradition placed the founding of their society in the peninsula in the year 2333 B. C., the first year of the Korean Traditional Era, "by a mystical personage named Dan-Gun whom people have believed to be the

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[1] George A. McCune, *Korea Today*, c. 1950, p. 9.

[2] SOHN Jin-Tai, *Outline of Korean History* (in Korean) (Seoul, Korea: Ulyu Moon-wha Sa, 4280), p. 2.

descendant of God.”<sup>[3]</sup> We cannot calculate the actual date when this tradition was created. We know, however, that this traditional idea was tied together with the nationalistic movements from the KORYU dynasty. The theory of descending from heaven, descendant of heaven, and so forth may be considered unrealistic. On the other hand, it is obvious that this idea has become a strong historical tradition among the people. By virtue of this fact we may say that the tradition of Dan-Gun is an authoritatively historical and nationally important account. Today he has become a quasi-religious figure in Korea, and remains an important symbol of an indigenous cultural impetus.<sup>[4]</sup> People to this date point to a grave in Koo-Youl mountain in northern Korea as the tomb of Dan-Gun, and the top of Ma-Ni mountain at Kang-Hwa Island off the shore of Inchon which is believed to be the place of Dan-Gun's descending from heaven. It has become a widely disputed subject since 1985 when it was proposed that an impressive Dan-Gun Temple be built in Seoul (and possibly in other places) out of the City's Treasury. It was strongly opposed by the Christians in South Korea.

The next period after the Dan-Gun era is known as KIIA Chosun, dating from approximately 1122 B.C. to the period of the so called “Three Kingdoms” of Korea. The name Chosun (literally, “the land of morning calm”) has continued in use till our modern day.

The recorded history of Korea begins at the time of Christ with the period known as the “Three Kingdoms” (57 B. C. to 668 A. D.). From then on the history of the Korean people is well documented. During this period the country was divided into three parts. The northern kingdom, KOKURYU, was the largest in territory and had greatest strength. Its jurisdiction extended over the greater part of Manchuria as well as over the northern part of the peninsula. It was the first to mature into a kingdom by conquering neighboring tribes. The first king of the country, Tong-Myung-Sung-Wang, the Holy King of Eastern Light, had established his dominion in Tong-Ku which belongs to Manchuria at the present time.<sup>[5]</sup>

The other two kingdoms were PAEKCHE and SILLA. The kingdom of

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[3] CHOI Nam-Sun, *History of Korea* (in Korean) (Seoul: Sam-joong Dang, c. 1941), p. 6.

[4] Cf. Cornelius Osgood, *The Koreans and Their Culture* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., c. 1951), p. 214.

PAEKCHE ( lit. meaning "100 crossers") was developed in the southwestern part of the peninsula.

During these Three Kingdoms the Korean peninsula played a more significant role in Far Eastern history than in any subsequent period.<sup>[6]</sup> The important activities of Korea at that time were: facilitating communication between the peninsula and China and Japan, beginning commerce toward Japan, and struggling against the tribes of China, Mongolia and Japan. Consequently, a strong nationalism developed among the people. "The spirit of knighthood" was highly praised and extensively practiced, especially in SILLA.<sup>[7]</sup> Brave and patriotic knights were trained for a time of national emergency. The people named the particular organization Hwa-Ryang-Dan, the "brave young knights group." Buddhism and Confucianism were first introduced into Korea during this time.

In the year of 668 A. D. the peninsula was united by SILLA and thus became known as "United-Silla." The supremacy of this kingdom lasted for almost 300 years, during which time the high quality of its culture, the science of governing, behaving, and relating to others, and clever power politics and economical development, all earned for the period the term of "Golden Age." The capital of SILLA, the city of Kyung-Ju, was the center of a wealthy and benevolent civilization. The people could be heard to say that the whole world gathered together in Kyung-Ju.<sup>[8]</sup> Kyung-Ju is one of the sacred places in Korea today with many national treasures of globally renowned objects and great historical importance. The famous Pulkuk Temple there was built in 751 A. D. Today no visitor to Korea should miss this fascinating place.

Following the United-SILLA era was the KORYU (shortened version of Kokuryu) dynasty, 935-1392 A. D. During this period the name "Korea" (or Corea, Cauler, Coree) came to be applied to the country by a Westerner, Guillaume de Rubruc (1220?-1256?). While United-SILLA was torn by internal strife, the decline of the TANG dynasty in China enabled the districts of northern Korea to throw off Chinese control. This caused

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[5] CHOI, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

[6] George Nye Steiger, *A History of the Far East* (Boston: Ginn, 1936), p. 211.

[7] CHOI, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

[8] CHOI, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

a number of nationalistic uprisings in this part of the peninsula. One of these northern insurrections numbered among its leaders a man named Wang-Kun, who claimed descent from the royal family of KOKURYU. He eventually became the commander-in-chief of the revolution and later became the ruler of the whole country. His capital was at Song-Do (modern Kae-Sung). During the last two centuries of this era, there were constant invasions from Mongolia and Japan. Despite these troubles from outside, the KORYU period of history reached a high level of cultural achievement. Korean scholars made great progress in literature, and Korean artisans perfected the well-known "celadon" pottery. The organization of the government, the land system, and educational, social, religious, agricultural and price policies were restored for the welfare of the commonwealth. The Buddhist culture and its influence were dominant.<sup>[9]</sup>

Succeeding the KORYU dynasty was the dynasty of King YI (family name spelled Yi, Lee, or Rhee). This dynasty occupied the Korean throne for 518 years (1392-1910 A. D.). The last monarch of the KORYU dynasty came to the throne in 1389 A. D. One of his ablest advisors, General YI Syeng-Kyei, who was in fact the king's father-in-law and the commander-in-chief of the Korean Army, was the chief sower of discontent with the king's rule. General YI appeared to have enjoyed the respect and confidence both of his official colleagues and of the people in general. For three years he attempted, unsuccessfully, to curb the excesses of his royal son-in-law. In 1392, recognizing the hopelessness of this reform task, YI deposed the king and seated himself upon the throne as the founder of a new dynasty. In the annals of YI Dynasty, the new monarch is known as YI Tai-Jo which means the great founder of the YI, a new royal line. The new YI dynasty moved the capital from Kaesong to Hanyang (now Seoul), and changed the name of the country from KORYU to CHOSUN, the old name of the peninsula. The kingdom was then divided into eight provinces, for administration purposes, each under a royal governor. The feudal powers of the great landlords were reduced.

During the 500 years rule of YI dynasty the kingdom passed through several periods of brilliant political and cultural development. The first period, beginning with the opening years of the 15th century, was the

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[9] McCune, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

greatest. At this time the phonetic alphabet of the Korean language, **unmun** or **han-gul**, was invented by King Sejong and was admirably adapted to the reproduction of the spoken language. Sejong the Great (1397-1450) was an enlightened monarch and a patron of learning. He encouraged scholarly activities. His phonetic system enabled the recording of the Korean language in addition to Chinese ideograms. Moveable metal type was developed in Korea about 1403 under the King Yi Tai-jong.<sup>[10]</sup> Encyclopedia and histories were written, e.g., the great work of Yi-Jo-Sil-Lok. Government was established according to the strict Confucian principles. The Chinese style of examination system for civil servants, known as **kwa-ku**, was adapted and practiced. Subsequently, Confucianism took the lead. Buddhism in the meantime ceased to be the official religion of the kingdom.

The YI dynasty, too, had some social evils and negative aspects which eventually became the cause of its own destruction. Society was structured into four groups: **yangban** (aristocrats, with government posts), **jung-in** (middle people, petty officials), **sang-min** (common people: farmers, the largest group), **chun-min** (low-born people: shamans, entertainers, butchers, etc.). In a time of mental remissness and weak defense, however, came the devastating invasion by the Japanese (1592-98) under TOYOTOMI Hideyoshi (1536-98) with the unsuccessful aim of conquering China. Armed with muskets, the invading armies won almost every battle on land, while at sea the Korean fleets by their superior mobility and firepower including the newly improved ironclad ships known as "turtle ships," inspired by the brilliant strategy and leadership of Admiral YI Soon Shin, inflicted decisive defeats on the Japanese armada in every naval operation. The final truce was made in 1598. However, the wounds of the six year war were so severe that it took many years for Korea to recover. Meanwhile, the Japanese took away books, printing type, treasures and artisans (such as ceramists) with them for the advancement of their culture.<sup>[11]</sup> Immediately after this

[10]Steiger, *op. cit.*, pp. 309, 310.

[11]BYUN Tae-Sup, *A Comprehensive History* (in Korean) (Seoul, Korea: Sam-young Sa, 1986, pp. 318-23. This is a helpful volume. Also recommended: *COREA, The Hermit Nation* by William Elliot Griffis, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1882, 1902.

tragedy, Korea had also to endure the Manchu invasions in 1627 and 1636.<sup>[12]</sup>

Toward the end of the Yi dynasty, especially, there were more power struggles within the ruling class as well as factionalism among easterners, westerners, northerners, and southerners within the peninsula. Likewise a policy of seclusion vis-à-vis the outside world played a significant role until the end of the 19th century.

Due to increasing contacts and pressure from the outside world, Korea could no longer stand by herself as a "hermit kingdom." Time compelled her to open up to the world and learn from others. However, Korea was slow in adapting herself to the western world. The United States of America was the first western nation to break into Korea's medieval isolation by means of its 1882 Treaty of Amity and Commerce.

The main protagonists around the Korean peninsula in the meantime were China, Japan and Russia. After the Sino-Japanese War in 1894-95 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05, the situation developed unfavorably for Korea. By 1910 the unfortunate Japanese annexation of Korea was completed, bringing to an end the Yi Dynasty and making Korea a colony of Japan. This was the first tragedy in Korea's modern day history. At the time of annexation three forces emerged as dominating characteristics of Korean policy, namely: nationalism, conservatism, flunkeyism. These tendencies persisted throughout the Japanese era (1910-1945).<sup>[13]</sup>

The Korean peninsula was arbitrarily divided in two at the end of World War II by the Allied Forces. This is the second great tragedy of the Korean people in modern times. At the Cairo Conference in December, 1943, "the first genuine commitment" concerning Korea was issued by the U. S. Government. Roosevelt, Churchill, and Chiang Kai-Shek, speaking for the three Pacific War Allies, declared:

The aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that **in due course** [emphasis is mine] Korea shall become free and independent. [Since then, the qualifying phrase "in due course" has given cause

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[12] BYUN, pp. 323-25.

[13] BYUN, pp. 383-494.

for grave concern to the Koreans.]

The Russian Government agreed to the above declaration at Yalta (Feb., 1945) and Potsdam (July, 1945). The first step was taken at Yalta where an oblique reference was made in the context of a suggestion that Korea might appropriately be considered an area falling within one of the categories of trusteeship envisaged in the proposed U.N. Charter. More important for the future of Korea was the secret agreement apparently made at Yalta which allowed the Russians to occupy one half of the peninsula and the American Forces the other. Thus, before Korean independence could be accomplished the unfortunate division of Korea into two zones for a "military expedient between the friendly powers" turned the whole tide of progress.

The U.S. Government, in the surrender of Japanese troops, proposed that Soviet troops accept the surrender of the Japanese troops in Korea north of the 38th parallel and American forces accept the surrender of the Japanese troops in Korea south of that line. The U.S. did not contemplate a lasting division of the peninsula along this line. Before American troops reached the southern section of Korea on Sept. 8, 1945, the Russian combat troops had overrun most of their northern sector starting from August 10, 1945. After that time, millions of Koreans fled southward from the so-called "people's paradise," the communist-ruled North Korea. They knew that there was not sufficient shelter or food and jobs for them in the south. Nevertheless, they fled with one intention, to have FREEDOM. Then, on August 15, 1948, and shortly thereafter two totally incompatible forms of government were established in the south and the north of the peninsula, respectively. Two years later, the "Korean War" (1950-53) was fought on the peninsula and Korea consequently became "the most devastated land on earth" and "a nation of wanderers."<sup>[14]</sup>

Since that time, Korea, though still divided, has changed tremendously. In the south, the entire face of the land, both urban and rural, economical and industrial, religious and secular life, all have experienced changes. Did the people, their mentality, spiritual outlook, and their culture change too?

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[14] Cf. Harold E. Fey, "Korea Must Live!" as published in *The Christian Century*, early 1952.

**Documentation II: Won-Sang Ji and "Night School" at Suwon**  
— correspondence between Dr. O. H. Schmidt (3-22-1954)  
and Chaplain Arthur W. Meyer (4-6-1954)

March 22, 1954

1st Lt. Arthur W. Meyer (Chaplain)

AO-2235179

Hq. 839th Engr. Avn. Bn

Apo. 77, c/o P.M.

San Francisco, California

cc: Rev. W. J. Danker, Japan

Dear Chaplain Meyer:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter of Feb. 26th, which interested us very much. I have just had a long conference with Mr. Won Yong Ji, who is doing post-graduate study at our Seminary and whom we have come to know quite well and of whom we think highly. He was, of course, all excited about this project of his brother's. He has been in consultation and correspondence with his brother for quite some time in respect to this matter. I am enclosing a letter of introduction for Mr. Ji, if it can be called that, which might be handed to your Mr. Ji [Won Sang] by yourself or whoever may get in touch with him.

We are very much interested in this proposition. It may indeed be the Lord's way of getting us into Korea. It may be a starting point for work by a mission on our part.

Now as the next step we should like to ask you and perhaps one or two of the other Missouri Synod Chaplains, if possible, to visit Mr. Ji [Won Sang] and look over the situation in his school, to have a good discussion with Mr. Ji and ask his intentions, to speak with Chaplain Burgess, naturally, perhaps also with some of the other Armed Forces personnel. You can then tell us a bit more definitely what all is involved. What it would cost us, not so much at first as I understand the government of the U.S.A. would furnish the material for a school and the Korean people would furnish the labor, but rather to how much we would commit ourselves for in the future as to upkeep, teacher personnel, etc. Also,



whether there is any dormitory connected with this school or whether the students all come and go each day, also whether there would be any restrictions as to using a school like that as a base for our missionary efforts, to conduct services there and the like.

Later on the Board of Foreign Missions might ask Rev. Danker and one or the other of our Japan missionaries to come over and look into things, such as the Rev. Glock, in the interest of the broadcasting, since Brother Glock looks after that in Tokyo. Still later on the undersigned might be instructed by the Board to survey the field. The location seems very good as far as our own plans are concerned. We have planned the next trip of official visitation to begin about in August, but for various reasons had thought of taking the New Guinea, India, Hong Kong, Philippines, and Japan fields first, and end up with Korea, which might be a year from now or even a little later. But the program was left a bit flexible, if more rapid developments in Korea would indicate that the survey of Korea should take place earlier than the visits to the other areas in which we are already working. However, New Guinea also is opening up new work for which we ought, as soon as possible, to make a visit of investigation and developing strategy and plans for that new field. And Beirut holds out to us what seems like a tremendous challenge for possibility of work in the near East and this matter is begging for attention.

We have asked our senior missionary among Mohammedans in India, who is starting quite soon his furlough, to stop off at Beirut and spend some months there, with the idea that I might meet up with him there late this summer so that we together could go over the situation.

Well, these are the first steps. Let us commend the matter to the Lord and pray for a door of utterance. The Lord will show us the way and of that we may be confident.

Thanking you for your interest in this matter and for your informative letter, and looking forward to you for further reports and advices, I remain

Very sincerely and cordially yours,

O. H. Schmidt  
Executive Secretary

OHS : mk

HEADQUARTERS  
839TH ENGINEER AVIATION BATTALION  
Office of the Chaplain  
APO 970  
6 April 1954

The Rev. O. H. Schmidt, M.A., D. D.  
Executive Secretary  
Board of Foreign Missions  
210 No. Broadway  
St. Louis 2, Missouri

cc: Rev. W. J. Danker, Japan

Dear Doctor Schmidt:

Thank you sincerely for your reply to my letter of February 26th regarding the project of Mr. Won Sang Ji near Suwon, Korea. Upon receipt of your letter, dated March 22nd, I called together chaplains Behnken and Hoffmann, and it was determined to contact Mr. Ji as soon as possible concerning his school, with special reference to the questions you broached in your letter. This meeting took place in the office of the Base chaplain, 8th Fighter Bomber Wing, Chaplain (Major) John A. Burgess, on April 1st.

We found Mr. Ji to be a very personable young man, who quite obviously has undertaken this school project for the unselfish purpose of giving others the rudiments of education and a basic knowledge of Christianity. The school, with an enrollment of 150, is conducted each week-day evening, with Sundays devoted to religious services and Sunday School. The students are drawn primarily from the surrounding villages, especially the temporary village adjacent to the Air Base.

The religious ties of this school are rather interesting. Mr. Ji currently is enrolled in the Han Guk Theological Seminary at Seoul and commutes daily from Suwon to Seoul. As near as can be determined, this Seminary has no affiliation with any American Church body, being part of a body of Presbyterians which severed their connections with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. during the Japanese occupation of Korea. The Seminary is neither recognized nor supported by any American church body.

Mr. Ji and occasionally fellow seminary students provide religious

coverage for his school at Suwon. An interesting fact is that some of their Sunday School materials at present are provided for by the Central Lutheran School Association, 775 No. Lexington Pkwy, St. Paul 4, Minnesota. Thus, as you see, through this Association and Mr. Ji's brother in St. Louis initial contacts with this school by the Lutheran Church have already been made.

As for information requested in your letter, let me say at the onset that as presently set up the project would not meet AFAK requirements. In the first place, in terms of long-range planning the school is in a poor location. Because of the current United Nations military program the area is heavily populated. However, should the adjacent Base close operation, it is probable that most of the Koreans would move elsewhere and the area would again revert to agricultural use. Wise stewardship and strategic planning would suggest that any future operation and expansion take place in or about Suwon (population: 100,000); about six miles north of the school's present location.

Suwon, a sizeable city already in pre-war years, at present has several small American missions: Episcopal, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and a Holiness group. However, it is our opinion that the area has great potentials for fruitful mission work.

Also of importance in terms of AFAK assistance is the fact that Mr. Ji would find it difficult to obtain recognition as responsible supervisor of the project. He is quite young and, as stated before, is still a student. On the other hand, it is our considered opinion that his brother, benefitting from six years of American education and backed by our Synod, would find no difficulty in obtaining approval for AFAK assistance. When the project was submitted for approval previously, the matter was tabled: thus, can be reconsidered later, assuming the above indicated objections have been met.

We Lutheran chaplains furthermore are agreed that it is more important to begin any missionary endeavor soundly than to hurry vital decisions in order to take advantage of AFAK building assistance. Mr. Ji, incidentally, holds pledges in the amount of 200,000 Hwan ( \$ 1,111—official rate; \$ 577—current rate) for future construction.

The staff of Mr. Ji's school are serving at no expense. The current salary level for qualified teachers at that level is 8,000 Hwan per month.

The above are some of the pertinent findings resulting from our

interview with Mr. Ji. In the main, we feel that the possibilities are sufficiently encouraging to warrant future and more intensive study. At the same time, since relocation and the purchase of property are involved (the present school is located on government property) we feel it advisable that, if possible, your Board arrange for more qualified individuals to make a first-hand study of the matter.

I hope that the information in this letter will be of value to you in determining your future course of action. As it looks from here, this is an opportunity which should not be overlooked. By God's grace, it could well serve as a first step in our Korean mission program.

Yours in Christ,

ARTHUR W. MEYER  
Chaplain (1st Lt) USAF  
Battalion Chaplain

**Documentation III: Report on a Survey Trip to Korea,  
written by W. J. Danker, July 7, 1954**

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD  
JAPAN MISSION

July 7, 1954

Dear Brethren in Christ:

**FOR KOREA, THE TIME IS NOW.**

Brother Glock and I came away with that conviction impressed very deeply on our hearts and souls.

1. *The time is now for radio evangelism.* We had three interviews with Dr. Hong-Ki Karl, Director of Public Information, a man of Cabinet Minister rank. He attends Cabinet meetings, although he does not vote. He is the official spokesman for the ROK government. One of his official responsibilities is the direction of the public broadcasting system. He was very frank and straightforward. What he said was, in effect, "We want the Lutheran Church to open mission work in Korea. Send regular missionaries here and we will be glad to give you time on the Korean Broadcasting system." His implication was very clear; no missionaries, no broadcasting time. He was very emphatic that the old line missions in Korea, such as the Presbyterians and the Methodists, have no monopoly in Korea. "We need new blood and new vitality. The older missions have done a great work but there is much more to be done. This is where the free world faces up to communism. We carry on a daily struggle against Communism. The people have lost so heavily in a material and physical way, they are turning to the things of the spirit. The fruit hangs ripe on the tree. Please come and harvest it. First come, first served."

Brother Glock will write you in further detail about things pertaining to radio. I have no doubt whatever that Dr. Karl will stand by his promise to give us free time on the radio just as soon as our church sends missionaries to Korea so that the program can be made in the Korean language and in Korea. Now is the time to come in, while we have such a good friend at court. Cabinets can fall, political appointments can change,

but if we are once established, and our broadcast is on the air and making a good name for itself, we need not fear those changes. We should by all means get in there now.

2. *The time is now for the greatest foreign mission evangelistic opportunity which has ever been offered to our church.* I visited at least eight different churches, and everywhere it was the same story. Hundreds and sometimes thousands of people attending church service; nearly everywhere overflow crowds. Churches are built that are as big and bigger than the average church in America, yet soon they grow too small. I am sending you herewith a picture of a small church that seated about 200 people, and within six months of its completion, they had to knock out the lower section of the front wall and set up a tent to accommodate the crowds. Even in the days of greatest opportunity in Japan, there was never anything like this. We shook our heads in wonder and could hardly believe what we saw with our own eyes, and yet everywhere we saw the same thing. The Christians of Korea seem to be an especially zealous and energetic lot. The Rev. Otto DeCamp, Presbyterian missionary, at whose home we stayed, told us that from 10 to 30% of the membership of this church comes out every morning between 4:30 and 5:30 a.m. I wanted to witness one of these morning prayer meetings, but having no alarm clock, it was a quarter to six before I woke up, and I got to the church as the last woman was kneeling on the bare floor and pouring her heart out to the Lord. By 6:15, the church was closed again. The gatekeeper told me that 50 people had been there that morning.

Wednesday evening services are another fixture in the churches of Korea. Brother Glock and I set out on Wednesday evening quite at random looking for some church we hadn't visited yet. When we asked in a rather poor neighborhood whether there was a church around, we were told, "Yes, there is a small one over there." The small church turned out to be a church with a 50' tower and there were 350 to 400 people inside, filling it to capacity, and after the sermon we saw and heard something for ourselves that we had long read about, namely the custom followed by many Korean churches of praying aloud. Each one speaks his own private prayer in his own words. Because everyone is praying aloud, no one's words can be distinguished by his neighbor and thus in this flood of sound, each one has privacy and can speak in his own words those petitions that he would like to place before the Lord. It is a deeply moving

experience and I have never heard anything like it anywhere else in the world. It reminded one of those words in Revelation: "The sound of many waters." The flood of sound rises and falls and it stirs one very deeply. The Christians of Korea are mighty in prayer.

One is filled with wonder as one goes about and sees solid church buildings of brick and stone and then learns that they were built entirely or for the most part by the offerings and the labor of the Korean people themselves. One sees the poor mud-walled, straw-thatched homes in which many of them live and then, rising out of such a neighborhood, a stately House of God, built of brick or stone, and one can see how these people love the Lord and His church. The difference between their houses and the House of God which they themselves have built is far greater than anything we have seen in America. Missionary Kilbourne of the Oriental Mission Society which has 135,000 baptized members and hundreds of churches in Korea after 50 years of labor, said that he gave a Korean pastor a coat in winter time, but a week later the pastor was again going around without a coat. "What did you do with the coat I gave you?" "Well, you see, we are carrying on a campaign for our new church building and I sold the coat to get money for the church." The same missionary told us of people who mortgaged their own homes to get the money to pay their pledge for the new church building. Other missionaries, such as Rev. DeCamp, found nothing incredible about such stories. He said, "Always, with the Korean people, the church comes first."

We met quite a number of missionaries, including Dr. Linton of the Southern Presbyterians. He is working down in southwest Korea and is in direct evangelistic work. He said, "I have been in Korea for 42 years and there has never been such a great opportunity as today." Rev. DeCamp said, "Korea has always been open to the Gospel, but never so open as today. This is not any sudden transformation. It is simply a case of a good thing getting even better." Rev. Kilbourne of the OMS, which is really Methodist in persuasion, said that a large part of his time is taken up in just going about dedicating new churches. Some of these are new. Many are reconstructed. At present, the OMS has only two missionaries, the Kilbourne brothers, in Korea. For quite a few years before the war there were no missionaries of this body at all in Korea, and Korea received no subsidy at all from the Society. The church was completely self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating. A few missionaries



have now returned to help them with the work of reconstruction. The OMS alone had 135 churches destroyed.

As one goes about in Korea and sees these wonderfully vital, growing Christian congregations, one may get the idea that the day has been won already, that the people who are here, especially the Presbyterians and Methodists, have the job well in hand; that no more help is needed. But such is not the case. Missionary Kilbourne told us that while 5% of Korea's 26,000,000 people, or approximately 1,000,000, have become Christian, 85% of the people have no religion at all. Buddhism is decadent and dying, and in many places, practically extinct. Buddhist monks became involved in politics 500 years ago and ever since that they were forbidden to set foot within the walls of Seoul. If there is a Buddhist temple in Seoul, brother Glock and I failed to see it in a week of traveling about. The Shinto shrines, erected in Korea by the Japanese officials between 1910 and 1935, have been broken down or turned to other uses. We stood on a beautiful height overlooking the whole city of Seoul and there on this "Hill of a Thousand Steps," up which thousands of Christians had been dragged by Japanese police and forced to bow before the Emperor's Shrine, we saw, on where formerly was the Holy of Holies of Shinto idolatry, nothing save a simple white cross. We who come from Japan where Shintoism and Buddhism were reviving daily, where millions of people stream to the shrines at every great holiday, and where hundreds of millions of yen are being devoted to the shrines, could not help but thrill at this victory of the cross. In this sign we shall conquer also in Japan whether it takes 10 years, 100 years, or a thousand years. We saw in Korea the shape of things to come for Japan also.

How will the other long-established bodies feel about our entry into Korea? They wish us well in our radio venture and realize the contribution we can make first of all in that field. All the missionaries we met were reconciled to our church's entry into Korea, and are assuming that we will shortly do so. The uniform reply is, "Many other new mission groups are coming in. Why don't you come in, too?" One gets the impression that they would rather see a well-established church body like ours enter, than many of the independent missionaries and fly-by-night organizations who have no solid backing and who may well pull out of Korea as soon as the going gets tough and Korea drops out of the headlines. At present, Korea is much in the thinking of the people at home



and provides a very good appeal and offers them an opportunity to build up their budget. Moreover, the missionaries whom we met appeared to take comfort from the fact that the Missouri Synod is known as a conservative church body. The Methodists and Presbyterians who are active in Korea for the most part represent the conservative elements within their respective church bodies and therefore the Korean Christian church is, for the most part, a spiritually vital church. There will be no trouble about our church's entry into Korea. Many other groups are coming in now. Missionaries' families are transferring from Japan to Korea right now. Why should our synod wait and be one of the last to enter Korea in this post-war period and take what is left? In Japan, we were fortunate that we came in quickly and aggressively in 1948, as the first of seven post-war Lutheran Mission groups. We had more than a year's head start over any other Lutheran group and that difference shows up very prominently in our statistics today, even though our group does not have the largest number of missionaries. "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." There is a time in the affairs of God and of His Church, and for Korea, the time is now. As one Lutheran chaplain said, "The situation cries for decision."

3. *The time is now, because our Lutheran chaplains and GI's will probably not be in Korea any later than next summer.* We spoke to six out of the nine Missouri Synod chaplains in Korea, both Army and Air Corps, and to two ALC chaplains besides. Everyone told us the same story. Barring unforeseen developments, the Americans will pull out about a year hence. From my experience in Japan, I know how invaluable the help of our chaplains and Lutheran lay members in uniform can be in starting a new mission enterprise. We shall lose a very great advantage if we put off going into Korea until all or most of these men have gone home. Meanwhile, they are steering all kinds of help, financial and material, in the direction of other church bodies, simply because there is no Lutheran missionary of any synod active in Korea, while neighboring Japan has 250 Lutheran missionaries representing ten different Lutheran groups. The Army has a program called AFAK (Armed Forces Aid to Korea) which aids in the reconstruction of Korea by providing free of charge building materials for all kinds of projects, ranging from bridges, hospitals, schools, and including churches. Many of Korea's ruined churches are being rebuilt with the help of AFAK. AFAK provides all the building materials

but the local or sponsoring group must provide the labor, which runs approximately one third of the total cost.

For example, Mr. Won Yong Ji's brother, who would like to build a school at or near Suwon, could get AFAK help for this project provided a recognized church body would be willing to sponsor this school and insure that the school would be carried on in the future. The project has been tabled because he has no sponsor at present. If our group would come in and assume responsibility for the school and purchase land, besides paying the labor cost of constructing the school, AFAK would provide all the building materials. Chaplain Arthur Meyer very kindly called for us at Seoul and we traveled down with him in his jeep outside of Suwon some thirty miles and met Mr. Ji [Won Sang] and the other teachers in his school. This school is indicative of the spirit and initiative which some of these people show. Mr. Ji gets up every morning at 5 a.m. and takes the train to Seoul where he attends the Chosen Theological Seminary. He gets back about 7 p.m., then from 8 to 10 p.m. he conducts a school including religious training for 100 primary children, grades 1 through 6, and 50 middle-school children, grades 7, 8 and 9. Elementary education is theoretically free in Korea, but because the Government is too poor, in practice it costs the children about 500 won to go to school. The result is that out of 3,500,000 children of primary school age, 1,000, 000 can not afford to go to school. These children and their parents are very eager for any kind of education and so these little youngsters start school at 8 p.m., at a time when they ought to be in bed and sleeping. Mr. Ji [Won Sang], who expects to graduate from the Chosen Theological Seminary about September, 1955, is assisted by two Seminary classmates and another young man who attends an Agriculture College, in teaching these 150 children.

School is carried on in a small dilapidated church building and two tents on the grounds of the Korean Labor Camp attached to the nearby American Air Base. In that sense it is a very make-shift affair at present. Mr. Ji says that about half the children come from families who get their livelihood from the American Air Base, but the other half come from more-or-less permanent residents in nearby villages. He wants to provide education for the children who can not go to school, therefore he and the other young men are serving without pay.

I asked him why he hadn't appealed to the Presbyterian church. He

answered that he had asked his Seminary professors, but this Seminary is splitting away from the main body of the Presbyterian church and is more or less independent and without any foreign funds to help with the kind of project he envisions. He has not appealed to the Prefectural Government for assistance because he wants to keep religious and moral training in the curriculum. He and the chaplains felt that the school should be moved from its present site closer to the city of Suwon. Mr. Ji wants to provide enough land so that the children who can not afford to pay could work several hours a day on the land, and work their way through in this way. The Southern Presbyterian missionary, Dr. Linton, tells me that farm land is about 500 won a tsubo. One won is roughly equivalent to one yen.

Mr. Ji [Won Sang] made a good impression on us. His project we found to be substantially what Chaplain Meyer had reported to you. His letter and Mr. Ji's verbal report jibed quite well, I thought. I certainly felt that this school proposition deserves further study. A possible problem arises from Mr. Ji's attendance at a Presbyterian Theological Seminary. However, Mr. Ji told me that he has resolved to help his brother in the work of the Lutheran Church on his return, therefore I think he has already decided that he is going to become a Lutheran. I don't think that this would bother most of the Presbyterian missionaries in Korea, since the Chosen Theological Seminary is the center of the current church split in which a left-wing splinter of 100 to 400 churches is expected to divide from the main body. Of course, in conservative Korea, a liberal group is still conservative by stateside standards.

At the same time, it is well to be aware of this situation and give careful attention to Mr. Ji's theological views if and when we should resolve to work with him in the future. There was a right-wing split involving several hundred churches some time ago. The total number of Presbyterian churches in Korea is about 3500, but Rev. DeCamp was very much concerned about these various problems while we were there. I believe that these theological controversies, which I am sure are driving the people to even greater Bible study, also constitute an opportunity for our church with its strong emphasis on Scripture and Bible doctrine. Chaplains John W. Behnken, Jr., Ben G. Hoffman, and Arthur W. Meyer were with us when we spoke with Mr. Ji and his friends. As Chaplain Behnken put it after we told him some of the other things we had heard

and seen, "It all adds up to a wonderful mission opportunity". Although in the past, some of the chaplains in Korea have been rather uncertain as to whether there is a place for our church or not in view of the admittedly fine job that Presbyterian and other missionaries have been doing in the past, every one of the six chaplains we met over there agreed that our Synod could and should make a contribution to the evangelization of Korea. The chaplains are very busy in their own program serving the military. Many of them have little time to see mission work and mission opportunities at first hand. When we told them of some of the things we had seen and heard, whatever indecision they may have felt in the past cleared up like the morning mist. They all agreed that we should come in and come in now while they are still there to help.

4. *The time for Korea is now, from the standpoint of the people's need.*

If we want to help the Korean people, we should do it now while they are still in dire need in so many areas. Their primary need is still spiritual in spite of the many churches they have. Missionary Kilbourne said, "There is a great spiritual vacuum in Korea. The people are hungering for something. If we do not fill this vacuum, something else will." All the missionaries we saw were terribly overworked.

There is a tremendous need for education. That is why schools such as Mr. Ji's have sprung into being. I have already referred to the fact that one million children of elementary school age can not afford to go to school. The Presbyterian Mission and the Presbyterian churches have enrolled 62,000 of these children in so-called Bible Clubs which are make-shift schools. We found them meeting in crowded temporary shacks, in many cases, a hundred pupils to one teacher. Educational standards under those circumstances are of the most primitive sort. The teacher reads one line out of the book and the hundred children chanting in unison parrot the line after the teacher. It is learning by rote. You can hear these schools a block away. Rev. DeCamp said that their Bible Clubs were very effective in winning the parents. 60% of the parents became Christian, he told us. They get interested in Christianity because the church takes an interest in their children. What a tremendous field for a church with a history of parochial schools! The situation is entirely different from Japan where all the children are already going to free government schools and where we have to work hard to get a good enrollment.

Here in Japan, we have had to do a great deal of studying to try to determine where and how we could make a contribution towards meeting the medical needs of the people, since there are already a great many hospitals, clinics, doctors, and nurses, but in Korea, they are short of almost everything. You could begin almost anywhere. You could start your own institution or supply trained medical personnel to the government institutions as the Mennonites are doing. Medical and Social welfare work of every kind is needed in Korea. There are 300,000 war widows with an average of two children each. A great many of these need help. While we must leave relief on a national scale to organizations like UNKRA (United Nations Korea Reconstruction Agency), KCAK (Korea Civil Assistance Commission), or AFAK (Armed Forces Aid to Korea), there are many things we can do, supplementing their multi-million dollar programs, and personalizing aid to Koreans.

Now is the time to make friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness in Korea. Now is the time of the Reconstruction. Now is the time of need.

5. The political situation, as throughout the world, is still unsettled and unstable. Rhee's government is still beating the war drums for an attack on North Korea. The people themselves think constantly of unification. Rev. DeCamp told me that at these early morning prayer meetings people pray for the unification of their country. Christianity has identified itself with the people and the church has become one of the channels through which their national aspirations are expressing themselves.

It is necessary to go into the situation with our eyes open and particularly for the missionaries who go into Korea it would be necessary that they count the cost. In Seoul, the missionaries work and live only 25 miles from the Communist lines. It would take a jet plane only a minute or two to cover this distance. At the same time, we can never be sure when the H-bomb will come down the chimney at the Lutheran building in St. Louis, or the Lutheran Center in Tokyo. Unsettled times, times of danger, uncertainty, and confusion are also times of limitless opportunity. One can sometimes do things then that would take a generation in normal, settled circumstances. If we wait until things settle down in Korea, we may find that many great opportunities have passed us by forever. The Government is very friendly toward Christian missionaries and their work. Rev. Kilbourne of the OMS assured us they get excellent

cooperation. As you see, the official spokesman of the Government, Dr. Karl, welcomes us with open arms, so we say now is the time for Korea, precisely because things are unsettled. Because the country is divided at the 38th parallel, many Christian refugees streamed down from the north, and the former rather hard and fast comity between the territories of the various mission bodies were largely broken down, a distinct advantage to a new group such as ours. Rev. DeCamp told me that the only comity area that is still pretty well left intact is the territory of the Southern Presbyterians in Southwest Korea. The strength of the Presbyterian Church always lay in the north and the coming of the Christian refugees from the north has been a shot in the arm to the entire movement in the south. These zealous Christians from the north establish Christian churches as soon as they settle down any where. As soon as they throw up shacks for their own homes they put up a temporary shack for their church and as soon as possible they erect a substantial permanent building. However, by no means all of the new congregations and new church building in southern Korea are those of refugees from the North. Rev. Kilbourne told us that just the other day he dedicated a church building erected by a congregation of 350 members who had been gathered during the past year by a young man who graduated from the Seminary just a year ago, and while there were some refugees, most of these people had come straight from heathenism.

Korean Christians are zealous. They should not, of course, be overrated. The old Adam and the Devil work over there, too, just as anywhere else. I have already spoken of the three-way split in the Presbyterians. The Methodist Church is also suffering from a big split. Koreans are frank and forthright. They are also very stubborn. One gets the impression that they are also very much like our square-headed Germans of a generation ago, but they do have vitality and tenacity. When I visited the Yung Nak church in Seoul last Sunday, I felt as though I were back in Frankenmuth. This beautiful stone edifice seating from 1500 to 2000 people was built by refugees from North Korea and finished just before the Korean War broke out in 1950. There are 5000 members. They have to have two services. The 10 a.m. service was so jammed I could not even get into the door. I had to wait until the 11:30 service which was again filled, although not so crowded as the former service. We stood on the steps where an elder of this church had been murdered by the



Communists. He was worried about the church building for which they had toiled and sacrificed and came back before all the Communists had evacuated Seoul. They caught him and he was given five minutes to prepare to meet his God. He went into the church and prayed for five minutes, then came back and was shot to death on the steps of the church for which he had given his labor, his money, and now his life.

Five hundred Presbyterian pastors were martyred by the Communists, but 650 Korean POW's who refused to return to North Korea have resolved to study for the ministry.

Now is the time for Korea. The next question is "How?" Brother Glock and I feel that by far the best and quickest way to meet this situation would be to transfer someone from Japan who has had foreign mission experience and who would be more prepared to evaluate and understand the situation in Korea. It is of critical importance that we follow the proper mission principles from the very beginning in Korea. Rev. DeCamp said, "For the sake of our future good relations I hope that your church will follow the principles of self-support that we have pursued in Korea all these years and I hope that you will concentrate on reaching the unreached, rather than those who have already been won by other churches." I am sure that none of our men would want to be guilty of proselyting. The matter of following the Nevius method in Korea will, however, not be too easy and it will take someone who is deeply persuaded of the wisdom of his method. Rev. DeCamp said, "Koreans are the greatest beggars in the world. You have to say 'no' because it is for the good of the church." If we come into Korea, we should not break down, by our example, these policies that have been worked out with such blessing under great toil over the past 70 years. Both Rev. DeCamp of the Presbyterian Mission and Rev. Kilbourne of the OMS were highly critical of the Southern Baptists, who came into Korea in '50, right before the war broke out and who have expanded their work in these past few years. Neither the PM nor the OMS pays the salaries of pastors or subsidizes them, and they are both highly resentful of the Southern Baptists, who they say have come in and "bought some of our pastors." They go on to say, "of course they didn't get our good ones." Missionary Kilbourne gave one example. He said the Southern Baptists hired one of the OMS ministers who had been expelled from the conference for adultery. The Southern Baptists built him a church and on the day of dedication he

suffered a stroke in the pulpit and died. Missionary Kilbourne said it was several weeks before anybody came back to church after that.

If we go into Korea, we should train our own leadership. We should not take anybody else's ministers, both for our own protection and for the welfare of the fine Christian church already existing in Korea. We in Japan have been spending a great deal of time, especially in this past year, thinking over and studying methods of self-support in foreign mission work, and I believe someone from over here with mission experience could best establish and guide our work in Korea, particularly in its early critical stages. Therefore, one man should be sent over as soon as possible as a coordinator and administrator. The logistical situation is still very tight. Brother Del and I were literally picking our way from one meal to the next, but we have secured an opening. Rev. DeCamp, in reply to our direct question, felt quite sure that he could provide room and board for one missionary on the Presbyterian compound, which is quite an establishment. This is just the same way we had to get our start in Japan. This would give the missionary the opportunity to look around and get housing for his family, preferably a good-sized house so that there would be room to take in the transients and the missionaries who would be bound to keep his guest rooms busy. Then, by the end of the year, the Government hopes to get its own 100,000 watt transmitter established at Seoul. At that time, Dr. Karl assured us that we could have 30 minutes, whereas he could only give us 15 minutes before that time. This 15 minute spot would open up at the earliest some time this fall. However, I think Brother Glock would rather wait for the 30 minute program since the big backlog of programs already worked out for the past Japan Lutheran Hour programs could then be readily adapted. Therefore, the radio missionary should come in by the end of the year. It may be possible for Brother Glock to train others to carry on the already well-established Japan Lutheran Hour by that time so that he could come into Korea to devote his time primarily to Korea. The Government is also planning a 100,000 watt transmitter at Suwon which could carry some of our other Oriental broadcasts deep into communist territory.

Next, there should be a man for Theological training, and soon, Literature, since there is no Lutheran Literature available in Korea. There will also probably be openings for able, experienced men to head the Medical-Social Welfare work and Education. This will give you a well-



rounded staff, and it is possible that Mr. Won Yong Ji could head one of these departments, perhaps Literature, and be of valuable assistance in many of the other fields. We understand that he is planning to remain in the States and continue studying for his STD for the next two years. We think that he should come to Korea this fall, soon after, but not before, the coordinator and administrator hits the field. We are very glad that we had the opportunity to see Korea at first hand. Our concept of the situation over there did a 180° turn. We started out with the idea that getting the Lutheran Hour on the air was the burning issue. We had also heard that Rev. Yaeger and Rev. Kraemer of the Lutheran Service Commission were coming out with the possibility of establishing a Lutheran Service Center, and we had also heard that there was much question and indecision as to the advisability of beginning Lutheran mission work in Korea. Now that we have returned, the situation looks like this to us.

1. The Lutheran Hour has a wonderful open door in Korea, but Dr. Karl is not ready for it, and will not be for some time.

2. Not one of the chaplains can see any sense in establishing a Service Center as such over there at this time, in view of the fact that the military in Korea is proceeding on the assumption that all troops will be taken out a year hence.

3. Thus, far from being a burning issue primarily for the Lutheran Hour program, Korea is a burning issue that demands immediate attention and decision of the Board of Foreign Missions. Korea is your show. The Lutheran Hour and the Armed Forces Service Commission can and probably will play a supporting role over there, but it is the Board of Foreign Missions that must, and, I am sure, will take the lead for Korea. The time is now.

Yours respectfully,  
/s/W. J. Danker

**Documentation IV: An Address to the BFM-LCMS,**  
January 21, 1957, by Won Yong JI

Mr. Chairman, Dr. [O. H.] Schmidt, and respected members of the Board of Foreign Missions [of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod]:

First of all, let me express my deep appreciation to you for this opportunity to address you this afternoon. I would like to talk about the need which Korea has toward its Christianization, and of the opportunity which our Missouri Synod has in helping to answer that need. I believe that the time is at hand for us to begin mission work in Korea.

To such an appeal, however, some counter-arguments may be raised, namely, that we should not start mission work in Korea because 1) Korea is already Christianized enough; 2) because there are many denominations already working; 3) because of the uncertain international and political situation; 4) because of the lack of funds for such a new mission.

In my mind, these arguments cannot be reasonably justified.

First, Korea is perhaps more Christianized than many other nations in Asia; nevertheless, she is no more than five percent Christian including Protestants and Roman Catholics. In America, where more than 60 percent of the population is already Christianized, we are still doing mission work which is also absolutely demanding. It is much the same with Germany, England, South America, Canada, etc. Korea is probably viewed by foreigners as more Christianized than it actually is. The reason is this that many influential leaders of Korea, in government, national assembly, educational institutions, social and cultural organizations and among youth organizations and the like, are affiliated with Christian churches. This picture may give an illusion that Korea is very much Christianized. The fact that a leader or a spokesman of the people is a Christian does not necessarily mean that the people under his leadership are also Christians. How many people in Korea, the under-privileged and those who are in the remote rural areas, actually know about Christian

religion? A very small number!

Secondly, if we cannot and should not work where there are other denominations already working, we can hardly start any work anywhere at all. Perhaps some isolated small islands or no-man's lands in the Pacific or some neglected parts of remote continents. Thanks be to God, our Church has been actively doing mission work even in those places where many other church bodies are active. We have our own unique mission.

Thirdly, if the political situation in Korea is too uncertain and unsafe to begin mission work, no other places in the world at the present time, in my estimation, are safe enough for missions. Are the situations in Hong Kong, Formosa, Japan; or even Middle East, India, Europe, safer than in Korea? Yet, we are doing mission work in those places. The tension and uncertainty in the world may never end. We can only pray for its ending!

Lastly, concerning the problem of funds for Korea mission, I would rather not to say anything here. In fact, it does not need saying. Only one question I would like to ask: "Are we really interested at all in such new venture of mission in Korea, and trying our best?"

In planning our mission work to Korea, the following factors should be kept in mind:

1. Although the great majority of Koreans is still un-churched, the Christian religion is no longer a new subject like in the past several decades. In one way or another, the people have gotten to know about it. Foreign missionaries are no longer total strangers or peculiar people as Koreans used to think. At least the people know that missionaries are the messengers of Christian religion. This situation tells us that we can no longer appeal to the bare curiosity of people alone, as it was in the pioneer days, in propagating the Gospel of Christ. Now we have to face the stern reality of the people's life and problems, and give them necessary assistance, as we are to preach the Gospel to them. Preaching through mouth alone cannot achieve the fullest result.

2. Although Korean Christians are small in number in comparison with the large population, they are enjoying many blessings, such as a great number of theological institutions (over 20), Bible schools, Christian colleges, high schools, and primary schools, kindergartens; Christian hospitals, orphanages, old-people's homes, and an ever-increasing number of books. The theological scholarship of the Korean churches is as a whole outstanding among other Christianized lands in Asia. Theological schools

in Korea are training hundreds of men and women at the present time. More than 100 theological students, who will soon be joined to the rank of leadership of Korean Church, are studying in America and in Europe.

3. We will be dealing with a people which have a high educational and cultural standard. Materially Korea has been suffering, but the people's ambition of life is still high and their zeal for learning is always increasing. Korea maintains higher than 85 percent of literacy rate. South Korea alone has more than 50 colleges and universities; innumerable newspapers, radio station, T.V. station, theatres, national symphony orchestras, etc. At the present time, more than 3000 Korean students are studying overseas: over 2500 are in America; over 100 in France; about 40 in Germany; 15 in England; in Canada, Scandinavian countries and Asian countries.

4. The following facts cannot be ignored that there is in Korea strong denominational competition, doctrinal strife at the present within the same denomination, certain personality clashes among the Church leaders.

All these aforementioned pictures give us a great challenge, but by no means a discouragement. Our Lutheran Church can meet such challenge, I am confident. We have the precious message of Christ, our Savior; the assurance of God to succeed; the unique tradition of our Church; high theological scholarship; and men of zeal and love to serve our Lord's Kingdom. So much Korea maintains the higher literary and cultural standard in her religious and secular life, so much the better for us to work.

In order to meet such a mission challenge and the unique situations in Korea, I, therefore, humbly suggest the following points.

1) As long as our Lutheran Church is to open its mission in Korea, it should be large enough to cope with such situations from the start. The number of missionaries should be at least five in the first year. These new venturers of the Gospel in Korea must be men of dedication and love, men of ability and high academic standing, so that they will be genuine assets to the Korean Lutheran Church in the coming generations.

2) The work should be concentrated in various areas: evangelistic work, an extensive educational program, radio work, student and youth work, and social work. The need of schools, especially for the underprivileged and orphans, is vital. In all these phases of approach, we

are by no means the pioneers. We will have to expect, therefore, to meet some competition and opposition.

3) The training program for national pastors and teachers must be given the earliest possible consideration.

4) The work among rural communities must be stressed.

5) Relief-work should also be conducted by our missionaries.

6) The work in Korea must be started as soon as possible.

For all these high causes, may the Lord give us courage and wisdom!

Thank you!

January 21, 1957

Won Yong Ji

**Documentation V: "‘Indigenous’ Mission Program"**  
by Won Yong JI, June, 1958

As an introductory remark: As we talk about "indigenous" mission program, we should be aware of the fact that it is neither a new idea nor a new discovery. This method has been discussed and practiced in various forms, in foreign mission fields, by various church bodies. Therefore, we should not be too exuberant about adopting such a method in Korea Mission.

Our primary concern is how to carry out mission work, under the peculiar circumstances of the field, with a certain goal of mission in mind. Each mission field has unique situation and peculiar problems, which the other field may not have. Thus, a serious problem in one field may be a minor concern for the other field. For example, the problem of hunger and starvation confronted by thousands of refugees in Hong Kong may not be a problem in Japan in the same degree. The illiteracy may be a great problem in mission work in one field, but not a problem at all in another land.

There is no one principle of mission method which can be applied to all fields alike. The important question is what do we mean by "indigenous," and how to put the principle into practice.

If the "indigenous" mission plan were to refer to the ultimate GOAL of mission toward which we ought to strive, gradually step by step, I would fully agree. Nevertheless, if it were to mean an already "advanced state" of a church mission, I could hardly go along. The explanation is simple. According to my humble judgment and estimation, the latter view seems unreasonable, unrealistic, impracticable, and inconsistent with the principle itself.

First, it ["indigenous" as being an already achieved state] is unreasonable.

Supposing you have a 3 year old boy, John. Do you demand him, or can you, saying: "Say, John, you must self-govern, that is, to take care of yourself; self-support, i.e., you have to earn for your living; and self-expression?" Of course, no sensible parents do that. It is neither sound

nor wholesome for the little boy for both his mental and physical welfare. Surely, all such ideals—self-expression, self-reliance, self-management, self-support—are the goals that every parent wants to achieve with his child in the course of time, but not right away at infancy.

Or, would we rightly ask a small handful of people who are just barely interested in church, so to speak, a beginning mission congregation: "You have to support yourselves, etc. . ." ? These are certainly the goals which the new Christian people eventually achieve and are now striving toward, but not right away from the start. First of all, they have to be nurtured, instructed, indoctrinated, and lifted up for the work of God's Kingdom. This view is neither heretical nor strange. In fact, Missouri Synod is assisting many mission congregations in America (where possibly the best economy ever exists!) and subsidizing the salary of the workers.

Secondly, the view of "indigenous" as being already "achieved state" is unrealistic.

To govern oneself or to be self-governing church under so-called "indigenous method," we must ask first: Where is the governing body of men? In the first place, we have to train the leadership who can eventually govern themselves. This takes time, efforts, and money. This is the process to the independent national Church leadership. Leadership-training too, like cultivating trees, is in the goal of final achievement, but not a state of already achieved.

To carry out God's Kingdom work, like in other work, it takes men and women who devote themselves for such a high task and it takes necessary funds. The workers must be supported. It is their right and privilege to be supported. Our responsibility is to support our workers in church or mission field.

A notable former missionary to Korea said; "It did work in my day..." First of all, I suspect whether or not it did really work in the way which he claims to be, likely a typical missionary exaggeration to make the picture more impressive and dramatic for appealing to the people at home. Furthermore, his time was some 25 or 30 years ago. The time and situation are changed in a remarkable degree. For example, the population of southern Korea is tripled. Jobs are hardly available even for the full time and capable workers. Half-time preaching and part-time working are almost unthinkable.

I would like to caution both the views of optimist and pessimist in

regard to Korean Lutheran Mission. I ask the optimist: What can we do with two or three men in a place where there are several hundred missionaries of various brands, with over 6000 churches (mission stations included) and about two thousand national pastors with some 1 1/2 million church membership, plus intense denominational competition, personality clashes among churches, and doctrinal controversies? On the other hand, I encourage the pessimist: Whatever we hear about Korean churches, it gives us a challenge, a great challenge; but by no means a discouragement. Our Lutheran Church can meet such challenge, I am confident. We have the precious message of the Lord, our Savior; the assurance of God to succeed; the unique tradition of our Lutheran Church; high theological scholarship of our Church; and many men of zeal and love to serve our Lord's Kingdom. The more Christians there are in Korea and the more Korea maintains a high literacy and cultural standard in her religious and secular life, the better for us to work.

Thirdly, the so-called "indigenous" method (as being already "achieved state") is impracticable.

It is not conducive to effective work. To limit too much the mission funds curtails the work. Nor is an excessive pressure upon the national workers in matter of finance wholesome to their activities and emotional and spiritual life. We are not the only enlightened people who can adopt a new method of mission. There have been literally hundreds of missionaries, sponsored by more than a dozen denominations, who are trying to explore all possible methods and techniques. If we don't want to subsidize the church work in the field, the work may stand still, or with little progress. Standstill in mission work means a poor stewardship.

Fourthly, the "indigenous" view as being an already achieved state is self-contradictory.

It contradicts the principle which it advocates. Under the principle of the indigenous church, we acknowledge, on one hand, the importance of flexible mission policies, on the basis of the special circumstances and situation of each individual mission field; but, on the other hand, the concept of an indigenous church from the outset would impose an inflexible policy by demanding immediately an indigenous church.

What do you then advocate, some may ask? This I believe and maintain in regard to the policy related to Korea Mission:

1. I heartily agree with and subscribe the program of "indigenous" (or



"national") mission program, *provided* this is to mean that our ultimate goal is to establish an indigenous Korean national Lutheran Church. We have not now attained it, but will gradually achieve it, with the help of God, in the course of time. Naturally, the sooner and faster, the better.

2. Although the amount of support (or subsidy) may be gradually reduced, in consideration of the capability of the national church, a substantial subsidy must be given by the churches in America through the Board of Foreign Missions.
3. Such a subsidy must be administered through Korean Lutheran Church, not through an individual missionary or any other single worker; that is to say, all mission funds must be handled in the name of the "Korean Lutheran Church."
4. The idea that we plant the Gospel message by just a handful workers and wait for a great progress by itself (if we had such an idea ! ) ought to be re-examined and modified. That is, we have to put enough manpower, efforts, and funds into the work in order to cope with the needs of the field.
5. The chief determining agents in regard to the needs of the field should be the missionaries and national pastors in the field. They decide the final policies of mission in consultation with the Mission Board in the United States.
6. Whatever the mission policy may be, it must be FLEXIBLE. The situation and circumstance of the field should determine the policy, not vice versa.

Won Yong Ji  
June, 1958  
St. Louis, Missouri

Documentation VI: "The Measure of this Moment"  
by Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann  
Aug. 18, 1957

Ordination sermon for  
Dr. Won Yong Ji  
August 18, 1957  
Jehovah Ev. Lutheran Church  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Matthew 16, 18

"And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

This moment has been long in coming, friend Ji. Behind it are years of prayerful planning and dedicated effort. In it are realized not only your own petitions but the intercessions of countless friends, many of them from this very congregation. It is supported, moreover, by an official resolution of our church's Board for Missions in Foreign Countries to begin work in your homeland as well as by a decision of the president of our Synod that you spend one year here in a flourishing American parish. In point of fact, it would be rather difficult to suggest another event in which so many personal and official interests are involved as in this present hour, the service of your ordination.

We must not, however, stop at this point, much as we might be tempted to do so. This moment means more than the realization of your work in Korea. Its full significance we can determine only in the light of our Scriptures, particularly in terms of the text before us. Here we shall find the full measure of this moment—its depth in the counsels and work of God; its breadth in the possibilities confronting all of us, and in the length and height of our common destiny as fellow Christians. We shall, then, turn our attention to the measure of this moment on the basis of a word from the Lord that is very familiar to all of us: "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell (death) shall not prevail against it."

## I. Its Depth

As anything else that is either said or written, our text must be understood in the light of its total setting. To this context we must now turn to see how the words of Peter fit into the total task of our Lord. When Jesus entered His public ministry, He began the task of gathering the true remnant out of the nation of Israel. He did so with a view to creating His church, the new Israel, out of this remnant.

His ministry was much misunderstood, because He went about the task of assembling this remnant according to principles that contemporary religion had either forgotten or failed to see. The Pharisees and Scribes were sure that only persons of obvious moral character and achievement did or could constitute the remnant of God's faithful people. Others believed that by some great cosmic catastrophe a new people of God would be assembled around Jerusalem in judgment over the Gentiles. Still another group built its hopes around the expectation that some great political deliverer would arise to drive the Roman legions out of Palestine and make Jerusalem the political capital of the world. All of these dreams Jesus rejected. Instead he called ordinary fishermen to become the twelve patriarchs of a new people that would serve God with a lowly and contrite heart. He sought out publicans and sinners; for He saw in many of them that right spirit, to which the Psalms of penitence referred.

God's ancient people, Israel, had proved untrue to its choice as God's very own. It had experienced the mighty deliverance of God from Egypt; and yet much too frequently it followed after other gods. For this reason the prophets began to speak of a new age and a new covenant that would supersede the "testament" of Mt. Sinai.

That time had now come. A new age began with the coming of Jesus and His proclamation, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." (Mark 1,15)

He began at once to choose the Twelve. They had heard His words and seen His works. Many others had done the same; most of them however, had turned away. For a moment it looked as though the Twelve might also leave. But at that point Peter's faith came through to say "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6,68,69)

Sometime later Jesus withdrew to Caesarea Phillipi to begin preparing

the Twelve for His brutal death on the cross. The moment had come for the Twelve to reach a decision. The Gospel accounts reach their climax at this point. From here the story runs downhill to Calvary. Jesus inquires of His disciples, therefore, what they think of Him. Then it is that Simon makes his great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This insight neither Peter nor the other eleven had achieved; this was a revelation from the Father. In fact, they had been chosen as men who would come to this kind of faith. In giving their conviction formal expression Peter spoke like a rock-man. He was, therefore, called "Peter," "the rock." Here was the rock, the first stone, as it were, for that new temple, the church, which was to begin building after the resurrection. "On *this* rock I will build my church," said the Lord. The creation of the church was yet to come, on Easter evening and the morning of Pentecost.

Quite possibly the early theologians of the Reformation and their students, in their controversy with Rome, made too sharp a distinction between *petros* and *petra*, as though the latter referred to Peter's confession exclusively. Yet their basic insight was correct. Here was the person with whom to begin—the first stone, the foundation stone—created not by flesh and blood but by the Father in heaven. Peter, speaking for the disciples, was that rock which, with the rest of the apostles, was to become the foundation of a temple in which Christ Himself would serve as the chief cornerstone. And the church would consist of rock-people that made this confession: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

We are still at work building this temple, which Peter himself, in his First Epistle, later described as a spiritual house. In this sense we stand in the apostolic succession. That gives depth to this moment. You have been called and are being ordained into the ministry of our church. In this way you are being set apart for the special task of proclaiming the Word and administering the Sacraments publicly and on behalf of our whole church. There is a very real sense in which this office of the ministry is to be distinguished from that of the universal priesthood of all believers. We need to keep this in mind in the face of a strong tendency to efface the difference between the pastoral office and the exercise of the priestly office which is the responsibility of each Christian. In this service we vest you with the authority to exercise the public ministry of the church, to be a rock-man and to help fit other stones into this new temple.

## II. Its Breadth

We have devoted some time to the depth of this moment. We must now turn to its breadth. To Peter Jesus said, "On this rock I will build my *church*." You will note that Jesus is 'speaking in the future tense. He is pointing forward to Easter and Pentecost, and when the great work of assembling God's people from all nations of the world was to begin with a new power, the gift of God's Spirit, which makes the church the activity of the living God.

As a pastor in our church you will return in a year to your homeland of Korea. As men look at things this is a small country, torn by war and impoverished by lack of natural resources, situated at the edge of a vast continent. Yet in God's way of doing things just this little country may serve as the back door through which our church will once again be able to enter the heartland of that continent. Small beginnings and limited facilities are no deterrent to God in His grace. After all He Himself came to us down the back stairs of Bethlehem.

Your task and the job of those who will both precede and follow you to Korea will be that of building an indigenous church there. This will be the first time in the history of our denomination that church work in a new area will follow revised policies and planning. As part of this new concept you have received extensive and specialized theological training, which is intended to make it possible to start soon with the training of some of your countrymen for the work of the public ministry.

Permit me to remind you that you go in the name of our whole church. It is worth saying at this point that our denomination, our synod, has from its founding made missions an integral part of its total program. True, in some instances individuals and agencies within the church have had to begin work in fields that were ripe unto harvest; and yet we have always had a synodical board to take over these responsibilities in time. We have been so organized from the outset for the purpose of expressing the concern of the whole church with missions.

Our prayer is that as you return to your homeland you will not take along our indifferences and our lukewarmness. Our hope is that a church can be gathered in Korea which will, like some of the other denominations in that land, retain something of the fervor of the apostolic age. Here in America men and women find it hard to take time for their

responsibilities to God. I hope that your people will always keep first things first. Then you and your churches may serve to call us to repentance for our lack of zeal. In this way, we shall be reminded of the fact that if the apostles were to return and see us at work in the church they would hardly recognize the consequences of their work. Suppose they were to come back and watch us at our weekly worship! Would they recognize the religion in whose dawn they had found it such bliss to be alive? Would they not have to say, "Is this the Faith that once stirred the world like a thousand trumpets? Is this the miraculous religion that set us afire as with a flame? How can these our descendants repeat with chilly hearts words that once awakened the dead? 'God was incarnate': Can they say that and not be thrilled by the amazement of it all? 'The Son of God was crucified, dead, and buried': Can they think of this and not be overwhelmed by its awful meaning? 'Christ is risen': Can they tell that and not shout for the glory of it? Why have they allowed these breathlessly exciting facts to be written in the dull catalog of common things and suffocated by the formalities of a routine religion?" God be merciful to us!

Here, then, we find the breadth of this moment: Our whole church is asking you to prepare for your return to your own country there to gather a church in which the glory of God will dwell and in which the Spirit of God will be as strongly at work as He was at Pentecost, the day of the church's baptism.

### III. Its Length

And now we must turn to the length of this moment. To Peter Jesus said, "On this rock I will build my church; and the gates of death shall not prevail against it." The hand of death lies cold on all things. The Spirit of the Lord blows upon us as upon grass and the flower of the field, we read, and we wither and perish. (Is. 40,7) Of the church, however, we are assured that it shall not be swallowed up by death.

Death is here pictured as an impregnable citadel whose gates open to devour all things. Nothing ever returns through these gates—except our risen Lord. Death is our first and greatest enemy. But it shall not swallow up the church. For with the church God identifies Himself in His eternal purposes. This is the new community, in which He dwells with all His life-

giving powers.

This is the most thrilling part of the Good News, which it will be your privilege to proclaim. You will be able to say to men, "Help us to build this temple; for it will not perish." And so you will be engaged in the kind of activity which shall not die. This means more than that you will be raising lasting memorials to the honor of your name and your achievements. It signifies that you will be gathering a people that shall live forever.

You will need a full measure of this assurance in your ministry. In the face of deep disappointment you will always be able to return to this word of high promise. The church's destiny lies beyond death in the realms of life on which the gates of death cannot open. We may call this the height of this moment—it looks to the promised land of our inheritance, where, with countless thousands from every people and race and tongue, we shall be gathered to honor and praise our Lord and king. To His Twelve Jesus once said, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom. . . that ye may sit on thrones. . ." (Luke 22, 28-30) This is the prospect that is set before us all in this high moment of your ordination.

Martin H. Scharlemann  
Concordia Seminary  
St. Louis 5, Missouri

**Documentation VII: Four Descriptive Reports  
of KLM / LCK, 1958 – 1987**

**KOREA: Ready, Set, Go ! [1958]**

The Staff of four missionaries selected to begin our work in Korea are poised on the brink of their big opportunity as the year 1959 opened. The year of language study since they arrived in Korea was nearly at an end. They are ready and set to go by the spring of 1959.

Veterans of the Korean War have taken special interest in the opening of this field. A well-qualified staff was chosen. The veteran missionary Kurt E. Voss, who once was a missionary in China, went to Korea from a pastorate in Springfield, Pa. His wife is a registered nurse.

Missionary Paul Bartling has had two years of foreign mission experience in our Nigeria, Africa field where he served his internship. Mrs. Bartling has a Master's degree in public health from Yale University. She is qualified to set up a public health program.

Missionary Maynard Dorow was a fellowship-winning student at Concordia Seminary. His wife is a deaconess, formerly a field secretary for the Lutheran Deaconess Association.

In the fall of 1958 these were joined by Dr. and Mrs. Won Yong Ji, a native Korean who had spent a year gaining parish experience at Jehovah Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn. He has a doctorate in theology from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

Until the Korean War, Korea was called "The Land of the Morning Calm." Today it's divided into North and South Korea and lives under the constant threat of a new war.

When Communist China intervened in Korea, almost four million of the eight million North Koreans fled to the South. Many of these are Christians, but are not without the churches in which they worshiped. As a whole, Korea is thought of as the "most Christian country in Asia." Though only about four per cent Christian, this would be eight times the percentage of Christians in Japan.

South Korea is an agricultural area — the rice bowl of the country. But in an effort to accommodate its four million countrymen from the North, and as part of its reconstruction program following the war, industries are



rapidly being created. The "Made in Korea" trade mark is being seen more and more.

Korea today is said to be a new country filled with hope and ambition. Education is regarded as the republic's chief industry. Schools and churches are being built, many with the help of American soldiers.

Koreans are warm in their hospitality. They love flowers, dancing, and liberty. South Korea is a bit larger than Indiana, but it has a population five times as large — 22 million.

According to Dr. Koppelman, Secretary of Foreign Missions, plans call for an indigenous church from the very beginning. "As soon as any people are gathered to the Word," he said, "they are to carry it on to others. The church shall, as far as is humanly possible, be self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting — from the beginning."

American workers, of course, will be supported by the church at home. Two more American workers will eventually join the staff.

Plans include the extensive use of radio to bring the Word to the people.

*Mission Digest*, Department of Mission Education,  
Board for World Missions, LCMS, Dec. 1958, p. 29

## KOREAN LUTHERAN MISSION [1967]

Among foreign missions of the Missouri Synod, the Korean [sic] Lutheran Mission is a relative youngster. Our church began work in 1958, a post-Korean War "Johnny-come-lately." Other Protestant Christian denominations, particularly the Presbyterian and Methodist churches, have been actively involved in Korea since 1884. The Christian church was already solidly established in Korea by the time Lutherans came upon the scene.

The basic team of three missionaries began wisely by thinking through basic principles and strategy. With Christians about seven percent of its population, Korea has the reputation of being the most Protestant Christian country in all of Asia. How could the Lutheran Church make a beginning and a genuine contribution in a land where the skyline is already dotted with church steeples, where the capital city of Seoul reportedly has 600 local churches, where almost every rural village of any

appreciable size has a church building of its own?

The reception that awaited the Lutheran missionaries was decidedly cool as disillusioned church leaders saw their church being wrecked by recently arrived denominations competing, overlapping, and duplicating work that had been carried on so effectively in the past. The pioneer team of Lutheran missionaries determined to go slow. They rejected an opportunity to gather a group of disaffected Methodists and Presbyterians and make them Lutherans, choosing rather to undertake various constructive enterprises while they were learning the language and becoming acquainted with the country.

The Korean Lutheran Mission decided that its primary objective was to support the existing church in South Korea and the work that had been done so well in the past.

Especially in mass communications, radio and television, Bible correspondence course programs, and the publication and distribution of Christian literature the Korea Lutheran Mission had become the accepted and respected leader. Success in this work is due largely to Dr. Won Yong Ji, a North Korean who received his Th. D. from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis and also did advanced study in Germany. Since returning to Korea in September 1958, Dr. Ji has made a tremendous contribution to the work of Christ's church in Korea. Author and editor, writer and translator, teacher, theologian, and scholar, Dr. Ji is recognized as one of the leading churchmen in Korea today.

In October 1962 the Korea Lutheran Mission secured a modern five-story office building in downtown Seoul. No other mission field of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod can boast of such a strategically located permanent mission headquarters. The Jedong Building is situated deep in the heart of the capital city on a main thoroughfare where thousands of people pass everyday.

Concordia Center, on the ground floor, is an attractive and ideally suited spot for displaying, promoting, and distributing Christian literature. It is also an information and witness center, the mission's face to both Christian and non-Christian Korea. Window displays speak a Christian witness through sign and symbol to the thousands who pass by. The response to this bookstore-witness center has been enthusiastic. Concordia Center, opened in the spring of 1966, during the single month of October 1966 recorded sales equal to more than 25 percent of the sales

anticipated for the entire year.

The Lutheran Hour is the cutting edge for the Korea Lutheran Mission's proclamation of the Gospel. Broadcast weekly in the Korean language since November 1959, the Korea Lutheran Hour has a nationwide coverage. Twelve stations beam indigenous Korean programs throughout South Korea as well as into communist North Korea. It would be unusual to meet someone on the streets of Seoul who is unfamiliar with the Lutheran Hour, which has enjoyed wide popularity in Christian and non-Christian circles alike. In 7 years of broadcasting, the Korea Lutheran Hour has won numerous awards and public and government recognition. The television work of the mission dates back to 1963, when the first Korean-language television station began operating. A beginning was made by importing a series of *This Is the Life* television dramas from the United States. These were lip-synchronized in the Korean language and telecast over the government station on a sustaining time basis.

In 1965 the Korea Lutheran Mission phased out this foreign-import program in favor of producing and telecasting dramatic programs completely native to Korea. The script writer, actors, and actresses are all professional people whose artistic talents can be viewed also on other grade-A programs. The first series of 32 indigenous television dramas in 1965 were telecast during the "Golden Hour" from 7:00 to 7:30 every Tuesday evening. The total package price for these professionally produced programs was fantastically cheap, all things considered — an average of only \$255 per half-hour episode, including the purchase price of video tape, on which 35 percent customs also had to be paid.

Happily the Korea Lutheran Mission began television witness to Jesus Christ while television was still in its infancy. There are about two television sets per 10 family units in Korea today. But the television industry is certain to continue growing by leaps and bounds, and the number of television sets is bound to increase at a remarkably rapid rate.

As one means of following up on contacts made through radio and television, the Korea Lutheran Mission sponsors a Christian correspondence course which has enrolled 200,000 in its 6 years. The course is divided into a primary level, an advanced level, and Korean Braille for the blind. Coming from all walks of life and from every corner of the country, enrollees on their own initiative request the study booklets explaining Christian teachings. About 50 percent are neither baptized nor

churched. About 1,000 pieces of mail are handled everyday by Korean staff members working in the Christian Correspondence Course department.

Among a population more than 80 percent literate and where people are hungry for education and reading matter, the written word naturally receives a heavy emphasis. The Korea Lutheran Mission through Concordia-Sa, the Concordia Publishing House of Korea, publishes a variety of books and booklets, pamphlets and periodicals. An extensive literature program covers basic theological textbooks, instructional and devotional materials, popular Christian literature, and evangelistic tracts. About 5,500 copies of a 70-page magazine called *New Life* are published every month; 3,000 of these are paid subscriptions. *Luther Study* is a new venture which was begun in 1965. The quarterly periodical is geared towards sharing the heritage of the Reformation with theologians, historians, scholars, and concerned Christians.

But the work and witness of our church through mass communications is matched also by more familiar evangelistic activity. In fact, work in mass communications provides an exciting context for these other evangelistic efforts.

As of 1966, there were two Lutheran churches in Korea, both in Seoul. These are beehives of activity with worship services, crowded vacation Bible schools, Sunday school and its "rush hour" as eager youngsters cannot wait to get into the church, special filmstrip and movie programs, special rallies for Christian Correspondence Course graduates, and instruction classes culminating in the baptism of additional adults and children.

A central church facility is being established in Seoul for a multiphased ministry. And within the next 3 years groups of Lutheran Korean Christians will gather around Word and sacrament also at four other locations in the greater Seoul area.

The future and real growth of the Lutheran Church in Korea will depend primarily, however, on thorough training of Korean national leaders. March 1966 will always remain a significant date in Korean Lutheran Church history because that date marks the formal beginning of our theological training program. Four students enrolled in the first class, all graduates of an accredited Korean college. Students of this "Lutheran Theological Academy" throughout a 4-year seminary study

program also share in direct evangelistic activity with Lutheran clergymen in Korea. The first Korean national to be ordained in Korea as a Lutheran pastor was the Rev. Won Sang Ji, who completed a colloquy program and was ordained in the spring of 1965. Two other men are also enrolled in a colloquy program.

But the church must be concerned about the physical as well as the spiritual needs of men, preaching a whole gospel for the whole man. In Korea there are still plenty of orphanages, massive unemployment problems, plenty of poverty, plenty of social, economic, and medical needs which have not nearly been met. So the church in Korea is involved in social-welfare work — supporting orphanages, building and supporting other welfare institutions, supporting land reclamation, community development, and other types of self-help programs.

In March 1966 the Korea Lutheran Mission formally began an organized social-welfare program called the “Ministry of Mercy and Service” to help meet these great needs. Headed by a social worker-deacon of the Lutheran Church of Norway, this program is a people-centered ministry set up to help people help themselves. This is carried on in close coordination with overall evangelistic work, especially that carried on in local churches.

Work among the blind has also been a special area of concern for the Korea Lutheran Mission, which has provided leadership and support to help blind people become self-sufficient and contributing members in their society.

*Mission Digest*, Department of Mission Education,  
BWM/LCMS, January ( ? ), 1967, pp. 25-27

## A REPORT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF KLC (LCK) [1973]

### Major Developments

The Korea Lutheran Church (KLC) understands itself to be a member of the total community of God's people who by the power of the Spirit confess Christ as Savior and Lord and live a new life in Him. Standing within the theological and liturgical tradition of the Lutheran Reformation, and working within the context of the special social, cultural, and political

situation of Korea, the KLC shares with the total Christian church in this land the distinctive contributions of Lutheran confessional theology, with its specific emphasis on Law and Gospel, Word and Sacraments, and works together with other churches on both the national and international levels in furthering God's mission in the world.

With this understanding of its role, the Korean Lutheran Church was officially organized in February of 1971. It has been recognized as a "sister church" by the LCMS. It also sought membership in the Lutheran World Federation and was accepted into this worldwide Lutheran family in the summer of 1972.

#### Plans and Hopes for the Future

The KLC has developed a comprehensive 6-year plan which calls for the following: giving continued emphasis to the extensive and varied mass communication ministries, including radio, television, Christian correspondence courses, and other literature; implementing a long-range nation-wide evangelism strategy which includes establishing new worshipping fellowships; carrying on programs of mercy and service and creating non-congregational special ministries in local communities; providing for the Christian education and nurture of all its members through the preparation of parish education curricula and through the introduction of the Bethel Series into the life of the Christian church in Korea; constructing a functional multiminsty center in downtown Seoul for carrying out various programs of worship and fellowship, community service, theological and lay training, and other ministries.

Won Sang Ji, Chairman, KLC

A Report by the head of the KLC (LCK) to the  
LCMS's New Orleans Convention in 1973 (taken  
from the Convention Workbook)

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN KOREA (Kidokyo Hankuk Lutuhoi, 1987)

Lutheran Church Center, 86 Todong 2-Ka

Yongsan-Ku, Seoul 140

President: The Rev. Dr. Won Sang Ji

C.P.O. Box 1239, Seoul 100

An autonomous church since 1971, the LCK is small in numbers but significant in outreach. It is a growing church. From small beginnings in 1958, it today comprises some 20 congregations and about 15 ordained Korean pastors, as well as a large number of workers — full-time and volunteer — in supporting ministries. Four expatriate pastors and one teacher, members of the LCMS, fill special functions. In its modes of outreach the LCK aims to be of service to all Christian communions.

Its membership, having more than doubled since 1976, resides mainly in metropolitan Seoul and Pusan and represents a variety of backgrounds. Besides personal contact much of the response has been to evangelism through the mass media in which innovative radio and television programs as well as publications prove attractive. The monthly magazine, *New Life*, appeared regularly for two decades (1961-80). Newsletters and other periodic publications now take its place. Various types of extension courses have met a felt need. During an early span of years (1960-76) more than 450,000 respondents from every part of the country enrolled in one or more of these courses. As other denominations began to offer similar types of work, the LCK adapted its programs. It has placed particular emphasis on the Bethel Series of Bible study. Initiated in 1974, this Bethel offering has been expanded and also reaches across denominational lines. Evangelism by radio has featured the Lutheran Hour since 1959. From the outset it aimed to engraft the gospel into life situations, using a Korean drama format. Listener response to individual programs at times exceeded 400,000 pieces of mail. At its height the program has been carried by 26 radio stations.

The LCK's extensive Braille literature program has been welcomed by Korea's blind. Likewise, the church's concern for the poor, the handicapped and disadvantaged has been expressed through its Diakonia program of Christian service. Pioneering it until 1973 was a veteran

Norwegian couple whose long experience in China set these services in a rewarding direction.

As organized, the LCK polity combines congregational and synodical elements. The annual assembly reviews the work of the church and sets policies. Among the officers it elects is the president. His term of office is four years. The present president, Dr. Won Sang Ji, has been reelected to this office regularly ever since the LCK was organized in 1971. A member of the Korean Christian Leaders' Association, Ji has also served his turn as its chairman. Church headquarters are in downtown Seoul. A staff of about 25 maintains the LCK programs in education, communication, stewardship as well as the on-going business of the church.

The growing need for qualified pastors made the LCK plan ahead. There was also the government requirement (1980) for all theological schools to meet licensing standards. For years LCK pastors had been trained at the small Lutheran Theological Academy, operated as a "house of studies" in association with degree-granting Yonsei University in Seoul — an interdenominational Christian institution. Steps toward accreditation included transforming the academy into the more inclusive Lutheran Seminary (1981). Open to various types of church workers, the seminary's main purpose is ministerial education. For this group the authorized enrollment is 160. The seven-year curriculum begins with four preparatory years, followed by three in theology. The sixth year is for supervised parish practice (vicarage). The 10-hectare (25 acre) seminary campus, acquired in 1983, is about 34 km (20 mi) south of Seoul near the city of Suwon. The main building was ready in 1984, and housing for students and faculty followed. The cost of over US \$2.2 million was met mainly by the LC-Missouri Synod, with contributions from the LCK membership as well as from Canada, Germany (Bavaria), and the LWF. Lutheran Seminary, though still growing into its full academic program, is the visible sign of a worldwide communion as it takes its place among the country's many theological schools — one of which is the world's largest Presbyterian seminary.

The LCK occupies a distinctive position at home and abroad. In Korea it



aims to be of service to all Christian communions. It has therefore not participated in the National Council of Churches nor in the National Association of Evangelicals. LCK President Won Sang Ji, however, is active in the Korean Christian Leaders' Association and has taken his turn as chairman. Overseas the LCK appears as an embodiment of confessional unity, being a member both of the LWF and of the LCMS-led International Lutheran Conference. Although not a member of the Christian Conference of Asia, the 1985 CCA meeting in Seoul reaffirmed the importance of churches like the LCK being ready to fill an ecumenically mediating role, such as expressed in a Lutheran understanding of the gospel and Christian unity.

Toward that end another look at the LCK's beginnings and theological task is instructive. As in the case of Lutheran work in the Philippines and Lebanon, that in Korea sprang from the presence of a student from abroad attending Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Brought to America initially on a government scholarship [sic. provided by US Airmen at Kimp'o, Korea], Won Yong Ji [older brother of President Won Sang Ji, came to US in 1948 and] entered Concordia in 1949 [1950], and within eight years had earned his master's and doctor's degrees. His Presbyterian background in Korea had helped; and so did his year (1975) [sic. 1957-58] in a Lutheran parish in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Accompanying the first three-man team of LCMS missionaries to Korea in 1958, Dr. Ji [Won Yong] gathered and soon became pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Seoul. The following year he received the first class of adult catechumens for whom he translated Luther's catechism and other documents. This led him, in 1967, to project a Korean edition of Luther's work. In preparation for this he prepared a lengthy lexicon (multilingual) of equivalent terms. Behind it lay Ji's concern for a clearer grasp of the Asian mind and of the importance of dialogue among Christians themselves as well as with people of other religions.

In order to respond to the ecumenical and inter-religious challenges of the vaster scene, Ji [Won Yong] — like others of kindred mind — sought to relate Asian Lutherans more closely to each other, particularly in the area of ongoing theological education. During his term of service in Geneva as

LWF Asia Secretary (1970-76) [sic. 1968-75], plans for the still operative Asia Program for Advanced Theological Studies were adopted in 1975. APATS has since then provided linkage among and beyond the Lutheran seminaries in Asia and Australia (see Asia Introduction). As Ji is currently dividing his time between St. Louis and Seoul in teaching, the lessons of interlinkage are being passed on. When the seventh volume of [the Korean Edition of] *Luther's Works* [for which Ji is the General Editor and chief translator] appeared in 1984 — the Protestant centennial year — the publication was lauded by Presbyterians, Methodists and others. As in Japan, the availability of a growing selection of Luther's writings in an Asian language has transconfessional significance.

See "Korea" and "The Lutheran Church in Korea,"  
in *Lutheran Churches in the World*, by Dr. E.  
Theodore Bachmann, Lutheran World Federation, 1987

**Documentation VIII:** "The Lutheran Church in Korea: Its  
Background and Confessional Stance"  
by Missionary Maynard Dorow  
September 1985

This essay was presented by Dr. Maynard Dorow, president of Luther Seminary in Korea, at a meeting of the Association of Confessional Lutheran Seminaries, September 17-20, 1985, which was held at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary at St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada. The full title is: "The Historical Circumstances Surrounding the Development of the Confessional Stance of the Lutheran Church in Korea and its Theological Training."

This paper endeavors to describe the historical circumstances which have influenced the way in which the Lutheran Church in Korea has come to confess its faith. Just as the Lutheran Confessions came forth in response to particular contexts and events, so the confessional expression of the Lutheran Church in Korea (LCK) has developed with regard to the social, and in particular, the ecclesiastical environment of Korea.

During the early years of the LCK's history, the confessional stance of the church and the confessional training given to Lutheran ministerial students have been very closely connected. This is so in part because of the small size of both the church and its theological training program. The church-wide program of the LCK and the theological training were for many years carried on under the same roof. The confessional stance of the church has therefore strongly influenced the way in which theological students have learned their confession.

Theological training in the LCK is presently at something of a crossroads. It has recently moved from a "theological training program" — a kind of "house of studies" program which was called Lutheran Theological Academy — to a fully institutionalized form of training. This new seminary program moves forward from the base of a confessional tradition already well formed. However, the new seminary promises an even closer relationship between the theological training of pastors and the Lutheran congregations. At the same time the seminary offers the

potential for optimum education in Lutheran confessional understanding and practice through its full program of instruction and its community life.

## Beginnings

Lutheran mission work began in Korea in 1958, just five years after the close of the Korean war. A team of three clergy missionaries, Kurt Voss, Paul Bartling, and the present writer, arrived in Korea in early 1958. Dr. Won Yong Ji joined the staff as a national worker later the same year. From the outset we were organized as Korea Lutheran Mission. There are two aspects of the situation at the outset which I think are significant for this review of the development of the confessional stance of the Lutheran Church in Korea. One is the fact that the church of Korea, a Bible-centered, evangelistic-minded church, was dominated by a theological outlook shaped by Calvinism. Roughly half of the Christians in Korea in 1960, about 650,000 out of 1.3 million, were Presbyterian. (Using 1983 figures, the percentage today is similar: the Christian population totals about 8 million, of whom about 4.3 million are Presbyterian.)

For all its positive dynamism as a church, which early on attained the goals of self-propagation, self-government, and self-support, the Korean church was typically Calvinist in its strong strain of legalism, its low view of the church and sacraments, and its fundamentalist view of Scripture. As the Lutheran Church developed, its way of confessing the faith in Korea could not but take into account the fact that the Lutheran Church was a small fish in a large Calvinist ocean.

The second aspect of the Korean situation in 1958 which affected the outlook of the newly arrived Lutheran representatives was the unsettled character of the Korean church. The Korean War of 1950-1953 had left Korea impoverished and in shock. A homogeneous people for more than 4000 years had seen their nation divided, the north now under the domination of communist ideology and the south attempting to adapt to a democratic system of government. During the war more than 4 million people had fled to the south from their homes in the north, including hundreds of thousands of Christians, to escape the harsh communist rule of north Korea.

In addition to the social and economic disarray of the post-war years, the Korean church had to deal with the arrival of a host of sectarian

denominations. Prior to World War II Korea was acquainted with only the Presbyterian, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Anglican, Seventh Day Adventist and Salvation Army churches. Now came the Baptist, Nazarene, Church of God, Church of Christ, Assembly of God and other groups from the United States. And in more than a few instances these new missions rather freely took in dissident pastors and splinter groups of Christians, taking advantage of a situation in which, for some people at least, physical needs and the rebuilding of churches took precedence over denominational loyalties. Thus the arrival of the Lutheran Church in 1958, among the last in the line of Christian denominations to enter Korea, was greeted on the one hand by dissident opportunist groups looking primarily for some financial assistance; and on the other hand by the main line denominations with the question: Will the Lutheran Church merely add to the confusion and to the weakening of the church's witness through divisive and "sheep-stealing" activities?

The question was hardly a theoretical one for the KLM. Upon arrival in Korea on January 13, 1958, our missionary contingent was met at the airport by a group of Protestant pastors and laypeople who were already calling themselves the Lutheran Church of Korea. Having gotten wind of plans by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to begin working in Korea, a Presbyterian chaplain (colonel) of the Korean military had gathered a motley group of independent and dissident church people to prepare for our arrival. They had received encouragement from well-meaning Lutheran chaplains with the United States military in Korea. And they had been quick to learn that the way to ingratiate themselves with representatives of the LC-MS was to profess above all their concern for pure doctrine. But their more practical agenda soon became evident in their request for funds and material to aid their small congregations. The nature of this amalgam of dissidents became further evident when it divided into two self-proclaimed Lutheran groups, one favoring a presidential system and the other a committee system of church government. To make short a story that went on for many months, the KLM used the press to inform the public that it was not to be associated with any Korean churches or groups which called themselves Lutheran and to make clear that its purpose in Korea was to witness to the gospel in word and in action, and to contribute to the unity, not to the disruption, of the Korean church.

Besides affecting the KLM's mission approach, this early experience with dissident groups served to reaffirm the KLM in its determination to pursue an open and constructive position as a confessional church. The Lutheran confessional heritage should not only help to build a strong Lutheran church but also—and perhaps even primarily in the present situation—help to upbuild the entire Korean church. Our confession of justification by grace through faith as the core of Christian dogma—and the entire evangelical outlook that follows—should not contribute to division in the church but should strengthen and unite the entire church. This understanding of Lutheran confessionalism was basic to the formation of KLM's mission approach and to its relations with the rest of the Korean church.

The description of this aspect of Lutheran beginnings in Korea has taken longer than I anticipated. But this experience warrants some attention because it had some influence in determining the KLM's early mission approach and its understanding of how to make its confessional witness in Korea. Given the social and ecclesiastical circumstances, it seemed apparent that any early attempt to start congregations would invite a repetition of the initial experience with would-be Lutherans. Consequently it was decided to move most cautiously in starting Lutheran congregations, and rather to draw on Lutheran, especially LC-MS, experience and expertise in radio and print ministries to make a mission beginning in Korea.

## Literature

As throughout the church, so also in Korea the publication of literature has served the several functions of confession, of evangelism and of education. A brief account of Lutheran publications in Korea will serve our purpose here.

It is perhaps natural enough that the first Lutheran publication in the Korean language should be Luther's Small Catechism. But it may be unique that the Small Catechism appeared in Korean before the beginning of the Lutheran mission on Korean soil. Dr. Won Yong Ji translated the Small Catechism already in 1952 while he was studying at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. After returning to Korea Dr. Ji translated the Augsburg Confession which was published on the Augustana's

anniversary date of June 25 in 1965. Meanwhile, two other important Lutheran works had also been translated into Korean: the section on "The Lutheran Church" from F. E. Mayer's *The Religious Bodies of America* and Luther's *The Freedom of a Christian* published in 1960 and 1961 respectively. Thus from early on the two basic writings of the Lutheran Confessions, as well as other important works, have been available in the Korean language as expressions of its confession and also as tools for training ministerial workers and lay leaders.

The print media became a major thrust of KLM. As a follow-up to the Lutheran Hour broadcast begun in 1959, a Correspondence Course in Christianity began operation the following year. It found a responsive audience throughout the country and soon was enrolling as many as 40,000 persons a year in the basic course which provided an elementary introduction to the Christian faith. Later an advanced course provided opportunity for further study. The CCC, as it came to be called, has been a basic witness to the Lutheran position that its confession and proclamation are directed to the upbuilding of the entire church and not only to the gathering of believers under the Lutheran confessional banner.

The publication arm of the Lutheran Church in Korea, Concordia-Sa, has over the years produced a steady stream of books, including especially works on Luther and the Reformation and Biblical studies. The current Concordia-Sa catalog lists 103 titles, not including tracts and pamphlets. Here again the target audience has been the entire Christian community, as well as the general public of Korea.

Two periodicals have come and gone over the years. *New Life*, published from 1961 to 1979, was a monthly magazine of general Christian interest. *Luther Studien* served to introduce Luther and his writings to the academic side of the Korean church. It appeared at regular intervals from 1964 to 1967. Limitation of resources in personnel and finances contributed to the demise of both periodicals.

Two current publication projects are of particular importance for the public confession and the confessional education dimensions of the Lutheran Church in Korea. In 1981 Concordia-Sa began publishing a twelve-volume selection of Luther's works in the Korean language. Over half of the projected set, or seven volumes, has already come to print. This quite ample introduction to the writings of Luther is making a noteworthy and constructive splash in the Calvinist ocean that dominates Korean

Christendom.

The second project is the plan to publish the Book of Concord in Korean. Only the Formula of Concord and part of the Apology remain to be translated. The target date for publication is 1987 or 1988.

### Formation of a national church body

The Lutheran Church in Korea organized as a national church body in 1971. At that time the church comprised just five congregations, all of them located in the capital city of Seoul. (Today the LCK has 15 established congregations, plus three new mission stations begun this year.)

The confessional basis written into the constitution is true to the Lutheran tradition and at the same time reflects realistically the situation of the church. Article II reads:

All members of the Korean Lutheran Church accept without reservation the following: 1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and as the only rule and norm of faith and practice.

2. The three ecumenical creeds, namely the Apostles', the Nicene and Athanasian, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, as true and universally valid expositions of Holy Scripture and statements of Christian doctrine.

A further paragraph states:

The Korea Lutheran Church also acknowledges the doctrinal validity and the historical importance of the Large Catechism of Martin Luther, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord, as further expressions of the evangelical theology of the Lutheran Reformation.

The distinction between the Small Catechism and the Augustana on the one hand and the other writings of the Book of Concord on the other was made primarily because only the former writings were available in the Korean language for actual use by Lutheran pastors and congregations.



In the year following its formation as a national church body the LCK joined the Lutheran World Federation, presenting its application to the LWF Executive Committee at its meeting in Indonesia in 1972. The interest of the LCK in the LWF membership stemmed from both practical and theological concerns. It was apparent that membership in the principal world body of Lutheran churches would lend status to the fledgling LCK in the eyes of Korean government and church leaders. Further, participation in LWF programs would open up opportunities for sharing and communication with other Lutheran churches, especially those in neighboring nations along the rim of Asia where Lutherans are few and far between. But besides these more practical concerns the LCK move to join LWF was consistent with its understanding of how it could best carry out the Lutheran confessional commitment, namely, by taking every opportunity to "confess" in an open and positive manner to the faith which forms the heart of the Lutheran confession.

### Theological Training

The LCK began a formal theological training program in 1966 with a kind of "house of studies" program known as Lutheran Theological Academy (LTA). Under this program candidates for ministry in the Lutheran Church got their basic liberal arts and theology courses at the College of Theology of Yonsei University, or occasionally at another institution. Students with sufficient academic ability were encouraged to take also the Master of Theology course at the United Graduate School of Theology, also at Yonsei University. Concurrent with their university studies the students took a core course of some 50 semester credit hours under the LTA. The LTA course concentrated on the areas of systematic and biblical studies, as well as practical courses in homiletics, worship and pastoral care.

This "house of studies" arrangement was undertaken in view of the limited resources of Korea Lutheran Mission, both in personnel and finances. Also it accorded with the cautious approach to church planting, since the LTA enrolled only small numbers of students, usually two or three per year and sometimes less. The high academic level of Yonsei University meant that LTA for the most part attracted highly qualified students, and the small classes and the intensive field work program

helped to compensate for the unifying spirit usually stimulated by a full school program. In the area of systematic and confessional theology the LTA students received especially good tutelage, first under Dr. Won Yong Ji and later under Dr. Thomas Coates. LTA graduated a total of 17 students of whom 13 are now serving as pastors of the Lutheran Church in Korea.

In 1980 the LCK began taking steps toward establishing a full seminary program of its own. The main reason for this step was the Ten Year Plan of the LCK which called for planting some 60 new churches by 1991, and the consequent need for many more ministerial workers than the LTA was providing.

The first step in this direction was the opening of a theological night school, a common arrangement in Korea which allows students with regular daytime employment to study theology. This night school accepted high school graduates into a four-year program of liberal arts and theology, preparatory to a two-year Graduate Course ("M. Div.") program required for Lutheran ministerial candidates.

This program was hardly underway when a sweeping mandate of the Ministry of Education of Korea necessitated a whole new approach. The government now required that all seminaries and theological schools meet the government's standard requirements for higher institutions or close down. These requirements concerned size of campus, educational facilities and athletic field, as well as standards for curriculum and teaching staff.

With the understanding and cooperation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and its Board for Mission Services, the LCK immediately began formulating a plan for a school that would meet government requirements for licensing. This was to be a four-year college-level school, similar to the night school which would soon have to discontinue. The Ministry licensing would allow for a maximum of 40 students per class, or a total of 160 students.

To summarize the ensuing developments: In 1982 we acquired a campus site of some 25 acres located 40 kilometers south of Seoul, very near Korea's major expressway. Construction of a "main building," including classrooms, library, chapel-auditorium, dining room and offices was completed near the end of 1983, at which time the all-important government licensing was also granted. The new school, now called

Luther Seminary, opened in March of 1984. Now midway into its second year of operation, Luther Seminary has a total of 29 students in its first and second year classes.

Meanwhile the night school program, begun in 1979, was allowed to run its course with students already enrolled before the government clamp-down was finalized. This program has been the main source of student recruits for the two-year Graduate Program or "M. Div." course. This "M. Div." course also accepts general college graduates who must then study three years for their diploma of vocation. The "M. Div." course and final graduating class of the night school have a combined enrollment of 23 students, making a total of 52 students being trained by Luther Seminary.

How does the shift from Luther Theological Academy to Luther Seminary bear on the confessional Lutheran training of Lutheran ministers? It is too soon to compare results, but I might compare differences in setting. The LTA did not lack in formal training in the Confessions or in conveying a confessional outlook through its own course of studies. And in some measure at least the counterpoint of the emphasis on Calvinist and 20th century theologies at Yonsei University forced our students to think through for themselves the meaning of their confessional theology.

The advantages of Luther Seminary in this regard are obvious. Besides the fulltime formal classroom training, students have constant exposure to Lutheran professors in all the theological disciplines as well as to the practical application of confessional principles in daily worship and other aspects of campus life. I look forward to Luther Seminary playing a strong role in conveying a clear understanding of Lutheran confessionalism and in instilling a strong consciousness of the significance of that confessionalism for the church, both within the Lutheran family and for the entire church.

#### Summary points:

1. The way in which the Lutheran Church in Korea has come to perceive its role as a bearer of the Lutheran confession has necessarily been affected by the historical circumstances and contexts of its development.
2. The publication of literature in the Korean language has played a

major role in giving expression to the Lutheran confessional position of the Lutheran Church in Korea.

3. The Lutheran Church in Korea and its predecessor organization, the Korea Lutheran Mission, have taken seriously their formal subscription to the Lutheran Confessions.
4. The Lutheran Church in Korea has adopted a stance of positive and constructive confession toward the church at large in Korea, corresponding with its programs which aim to contribute toward strengthening the entire Korean church both in its theology and in its mission.
5. The theological training program of the Lutheran Church in Korea has endeavored to equip its pastors to make the Lutheran confessions and the article of justification by faith central to their ministry. The development of Luther Seminary provides opportunity for continued improvement in equipping Lutheran ministerial workers for their task of establishing congregations centered in the doctrine of justification by grace through faith.

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## **Photos**

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1.  
Rev. Karl  
Friedrich August  
Gützlaff (1803-51),  
the first Lutheran (German)  
clergy missionary, or "the  
first Protestant missionary"  
who worked in Korea for  
a month in July and August  
of 1832.



2.  
The Karl F. A. Gützlaff monument on Won-San Island off the west coast of Korea near Tae-Chon. This memorial was placed here on July 17, 1982, commemorating the 150th anniversary of Gützlaff's visit to Korea, by the National Council of Churches in Korea, the Korea Christian Medical-Evangelical [sic] Association, the German Embassy in Korea, the Netherlands Embassy in Korea and the Song Juk Educational Foundation Community Development Committee. Pictured are the author of this monograph (5th from left) with Lutheran pastors and other friends.



3.

*Inchon Harbor, South Korea:  
March 27, 1948, sending off Mr.  
Won-Yong Ji to USA for study.  
From left: LEE Tae-Sang, IM  
Kak-Soun, PAIK Jae-Sung, Ji  
Won-Sang, Chaplain Hal H.  
Martin, Wilbur Cain, Won-Yong  
Ji, Kenneth Harris, four  
unidentified US airmen  
stationed at Kimpo Air Base,  
and boy Gary Martin.*



4.

*Inchon, Korea: Chaplain Hal H.  
Martin accompanying Mr. Won-  
Yong Ji to the U.S. SS General  
HAAN, on March 27, 1948, 11:  
00 a.m.*



5.  
*Dr. and Mrs. Won Yong Ji, with their first daughter Louise Kyung-Hee, arriving at Kimpo International Airport, on September 26, 1958.*

6.  
*Happy reunion of Ji brothers, Won-Yong and Won-Sang, on September 26, 1958, at Kimpo International Airport, after ten years and six months.*



7.  
*Kimpo International Airport, Korea, September 26, 1958: Arrival of Dr. and Mrs. Won-Yong Ji and infant daughter. From right: LEE Kyung-Bai, KIM Chong-Yun, Ji's father-in-law, KIM Chong-Ho, mother-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Won-Sang Ji and his father-in-law.*





9.

*On December 24, 1957, the three Lutheran missionary families stopped briefly at Inchon Harbor, west of Seoul, then set sail at midnight on their ship, the S.S. Iberville, continuing their journey from San Francisco via Okinawa and Inchon to Tokyo, Japan, where the families stayed while the three men went ahead to Seoul to find housing.*

10. *Three Lutheran missionaries arriving at Kimpo Airport, Seoul, on January 13, 1958: Rev. Maynard Dorow, far left; Rev. Kurt Voss, second from the left; and Rev. Paul Bartling, center. At the right is Chaplain Werner Saar.*



10.

*Dr. Herman H. Koppelman, on his field trip to Korea in 1959, discussing mission-related matters: from left, Missionary Kurt Voss, Dr. Won-Yong Ji, Dr. Koppelman, Missionary Paul Bartling.*

이것이 참으로 루터교회와 교향곡을 불러온 다음  
하단집에 붙여주고 하단집에 따라 그 성으로  
루터교회 교인으로 믿게 됩니다

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역사학과 그 밖의 루터교인들까지 믿게 할  
것이 중요합니다.

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오늘 인제학교 졸업식에는 이창우, 김 미 자  
이와 동행합니다.

루터교회에 보내는 목회서신은 기도와 찬양을  
본문으로 다시 계속 할 것입니다. 4월 1일 날짜와  
시간은 새 주일에 알려드리겠습니다.

5.17.59

루터교회집회



주요 표본의 그림 가운데 "SOS"는 성경에서  
나와서 "소리와 빛"의 뜻으로, 그 밖의 루터교회  
본의 사상의 일치적인 성경의 강령을 상징합니다.

루터교회(서울로)가 하느님께

### 아침 예배 순서

이런 요일 10:30로 시작

연도: 제 12회 4차

독	도		
찬	송		원
유	마	세	대
시	전	51:10-12	
사도서간독후	참전	2:1-13	
독	후	송서	
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선	교	예배소 2:19-22	
		* 하나님의 권속이 되신다	
선	금		
기	도		
장년	세	대	
임	교	회	
간	송		원
독	도		
폐	회	(선 교)	

참소의 자리가 본관내 2.11.15.16.17.18.19.20.21.22.23.24.25.26.27.28.29.30.31.32.33.34.35.36.37.38.39.40.41.42.43.44.45.46.47.48.49.50.51.52.53.54.55.56.57.58.59.60.61.62.63.64.65.66.67.68.69.70.71.72.73.74.75.76.77.78.79.80.81.82.83.84.85.86.87.88.89.90.91.92.93.94.95.96.97.98.99.100.101.102.103.104.105.106.107.108.109.110.111.112.113.114.115.116.117.118.119.120.121.122.123.124.125.126.127.128.129.130.131.132.133.134.135.136.137.138.139.140.141.142.143.144.145.146.147.148.149.150.151.152.153.154.155.156.157.158.159.160.161.162.163.164.165.166.167.168.169.170.171.172.173.174.175.176.177.178.179.180.181.182.183.184.185.186.187.188.189.190.191.192.193.194.195.196.197.198.199.200.201.202.203.204.205.206.207.208.209.210.211.212.213.214.215.216.217.218.219.220.221.222.223.224.225.226.227.228.229.230.231.232.233.234.235.236.237.238.239.240.241.242.243.244.245.246.247.248.249.250.251.252.253.254.255.256.257.258.259.260.261.262.263.264.265.266.267.268.269.270.271.272.273.274.275.276.277.278.279.280.281.282.283.284.285.286.287.288.289.290.291.292.293.294.295.296.297.298.299.300.301.302.303.304.305.306.307.308.309.310.311.312.313.314.315.316.317.318.319.320.321.322.323.324.325.326.327.328.329.330.331.332.333.334.335.336.337.338.339.340.341.342.343.344.345.346.347.348.349.350.351.352.353.354.355.356.357.358.359.360.361.362.363.364.365.366.367.368.369.370.371.372.373.374.375.376.377.378.379.380.381.382.383.384.385.386.387.388.389.390.391.392.393.394.395.396.397.398.399.400.401.402.403.404.405.406.407.408.409.410.411.412.413.414.415.416.417.418.419.420.421.422.423.424.425.426.427.428.429.430.431.432.433.434.435.436.437.438.439.440.441.442.443.444.445.446.447.448.449.450.451.452.453.454.455.456.457.458.459.460.461.462.463.464.465.466.467.468.469.470.471.472.473.474.475.476.477.478.479.480.481.482.483.484.485.486.487.488.489.490.491.492.493.494.495.496.497.498.499.500.501.502.503.504.505.506.507.508.509.510.511.512.513.514.515.516.517.518.519.520.521.522.523.524.525.526.527.528.529.530.531.532.533.534.535.536.537.538.539.540.541.542.543.544.545.546.547.548.549.550.551.552.553.554.555.556.557.558.559.560.561.562.563.564.565.566.567.568.569.570.571.572.573.574.575.576.577.578.579.580.581.582.583.584.585.586.587.588.589.590.591.592.593.594.595.596.597.598.599.600.601.602.603.604.605.606.607.608.609.610.611.612.613.614.615.616.617.618.619.620.621.622.623.624.625.626.627.628.629.630.631.632.633.634.635.636.637.638.639.640.641.642.643.644.645.646.647.648.649.650.651.652.653.654.655.656.657.658.659.660.661.662.663.664.665.666.667.668.669.670.671.672.673.674.675.676.677.678.679.680.681.682.683.684.685.686.687.688.689.690.691.692.693.694.695.696.697.698.699.700.701.702.703.704.705.706.707.708.709.710.711.712.713.714.715.716.717.718.719.720.721.722.723.724.725.726.727.728.729.730.731.732.733.734.735.736.737.738.739.740.741.742.743.744.745.746.747.748.749.750.751.752.753.754.755.756.757.758.759.760.761.762.763.764.765.766.767.768.769.770.771.772.773.774.775.776.777.778.779.780.781.782.783.784.785.786.787.788.789.790.791.792.793.794.795.796.797.798.799.800.801.802.803.804.805.806.807.808.809.810.811.812.813.814.815.816.817.818.819.820.821.822.823.824.825.826.827.828.829.830.831.832.833.834.835.836.837.838.839.840.841.842.843.844.845.846.847.848.849.850.851.852.853.854.855.856.857.858.859.860.861.862.863.864.865.866.867.868.869.870.871.872.873.874.875.876.877.878.879.880.881.882.883.884.885.886.887.888.889.890.891.892.893.894.895.896.897.898.899.900.901.902.903.904.905.906.907.908.909.910.911.912.913.914.915.916.917.918.919.920.921.922.923.924.925.926.927.928.929.930.931.932.933.934.935.936.937.938.939.940.941.942.943.944.945.946.947.948.949.950.951.952.953.954.955.956.957.958.959.960.961.962.963.964.965.966.967.968.969.970.971.972.973.974.975.976.977.978.979.980.981.982.983.984.985.986.987.988.989.990.991.992.993.994.995.996.997.998.999.1000.1001.1002.1003.1004.1005.1006.1007.1008.1009.1010.1011.1012.1013.1014.1015.1016.1017.1018.1019.1020.1021.1022.1023.1024.1025.1026.1027.1028.1029.1030.1031.1032.1033.1034.1035.1036.1037.1038.1039.1040.1041.1042.1043.1044.1045.1046.1047.1048.1049.1050.1051.1052.1053.1054.1055.1056.1057.1058.1059.1060.1061.1062.1063.1064.1065.1066.1067.1068.1069.1070.1071.1072.1073.1074.1075.1076.1077.1078.1079.1080.1081.1082.1083.1084.1085.1086.1087.1088.1089.1090.1091.1092.1093.1094.1095.1096.1097.1098.1099.1100.1101.1102.1103.1104.1105.1106.1107.1108.1109.1110.1111.1112.1113.1114.1115.1116.1117.1118.1119.1120.1121.1122.1123.1124.1125.1126.1127.1128.1129.1130.1131.1132.1133.1134.1135.1136.1137.1138.1139.1140.1141.1142.1143.1144.1145.1146.1147.1148.1149.1150.1151.1152.1153.1154.1155.1156.1157.1158.1159.1160.1161.1162.1163.1164.1165.1166.1167.1168.1169.1170.1171.1172.1173.1174.1175.1176.1177.1178.1179.1180.1181.1182.1183.1184.1185.1186.1187.1188.1189.1190.1191.1192.1193.1194.1195.1196.1197.1198.1199.1200.1201.1202.1203.1204.1205.1206.1207.1208.1209.1210.1211.1212.1213.1214.1215.1216.1217.1218.1219.1220.1221.1222.1223.1224.1225.1226.1227.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11.  
*Signing and sealing the initial contract between Korea Lutheran Mission and Christian Broadcasting System (CBS) for broadcasting the Lutheran Hour, on October 5, 1959, Seoul. From left: Missionary Kurt Voss, Dr. Won-Yong JI, Dr. Otto E. DeCamp (the CBS Director), Mr. Chae-Bok KIM (the CBS executive secretary).*



12.  
*From left: Mr. CHOO Tae-Ik, KLH script writer; Dr. JI Won-Yong, KLH manager; HONG Suk-jin, producer. This picture was taken in March 1960.*



13.

Seoul, Korea: March 1, 1959 — Dr. Ji Won-Yong teaching from the pulpit of the conference room at the YMCA. In front of the pulpit is an offering plate. Offerings are freely given as the plate is not passed around. In front of this can be seen the top of a portable kerosene stove belonging to Dr. Ji who brought it to remove the chill. Hanging on the wall to his rear is a well used "portable" blackboard.



14.

Lutheran Retreat for U.S. servicemen in Korea, December 11 to 13, 1959. Seen third from left is Dr. Won-Yong Ji and next in order are Chaplain Richard Tupy, the retreat master, and Missionary Maynard Dorow.





15.

*Dr. Won-Yong JI, leading a discussion on mission-related matters at a gathering of Lutheran missionaries and national staff of KLM/LCK, while he was on his field trip to Korea from Geneva in 1969.*



16.

*KLM staff picnic with families, in 1965. Standing front right, BAE Han-Gook and Won-Yong JI.*

17.

*The ordination of Won-Sang JI, on March 28, 1965, was the first Lutheran ordination in Korea by KLM/LCK. From left: Missionaries James Lauer, Hilbert Riemer, John Hodde, a Lutheran guest pastor, Missionary Paul Bartling, Chaplain E. Karsten, Dr. Won-Yong JI and Missionary Maynard Dorow.*





18

*The Lutheran Center in Seoul where all functional offices are located. The upper floor is used by the Central Lutheran Church.*



19.

*Participants in a Bethel Bible Study Seminar in Seoul are welcomed by the Bethel director, Dr. Won-Sang Ji.*





## Comments from Reviewers

LUTHERAN QUARTERLY, Dr. Dana L. Robert,  
Boston University -

This book raises the important question of what the role of Lutheranism should be given the rapid church growth and Reformed ethos in Korea . . .

The author's knowledge of history and mission theory is skillfully interwoven with his personal narrative to create an unusually scholarly memoir.

CHURCH HISTORY, Peter Fleming, S.J., Sogang University, Seoul, Korea -

. . . It locates Lutheranism within the history of Christianity in Korea and Korean culture. Ji's study enlarges the history of Christianity in Asia from a local perspective, a major contribution.

INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN OF MISSIONARY RESEARCH, Dr. Wi Jo Kang,  
Wartburg Theological Seminary -

It is the definitive history of Lutheranism in Korea . . . not only a personal account but it is also a serious and scholarly historical work . . . This book takes its place as the standard source book on the development of Korean Lutheranism.

FOCUS, Concordia Seminary, Rev. Richard C. Pfaff, a former missionary to Korea -

. . . an invaluable resource for any future attempts at setting forth the history of Lutheranism in Korea . . . with insights into the philosophy of missions and the rationale for starting mission work on new frontiers.

CONCORDIA JOURNAL, Prof. Harley L. Kopitske, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis -

It is a case study of a uniquely contextualized Lutheran approach to a challenging mission opportunity . . . an invaluable tool in the training of all missionaries, pastors and workers.